

THE FALL COOKING ISSUE

SAVEUR

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Annual
**CULINARY
TRAVEL
AWARD
WINNERS**



Savor a
World of
Authentic
Cuisine

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**MAKE A
PERFECT
GUMBO**

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THE NEW CLASSICS

**8 GREAT RECIPES FOR
THE SEASON'S BEST SUPPERS**

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Muddled Thai basil is the essence of the Lucky Devil, 12th Ave Grill.



The ultimate, crispy Cornflake French Toast at Koko Head Café.



Asian-inspired soy-glazed oxtail dumplings are a specialty at Lucky Belly.

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HANG LOOSE.
HANG OUT.

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Hike Lē'ahi (Diamond Head)

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Drinks and pūpū (appetizers) are a way of life in Hawai'i. Whether it's an iced Hawai'i-grown coffee, iconic mai tai, a Kona Brewing Co. Longboard Island Lager, or a fruity concoction by one of the island's rising mixologists, seek out cool refreshments paired with hearty plates that feature locally grown products.

Nosh early at **Koko Head Café** (1145C 12th Ave. 808-732-8920 kokoheadcafe.com) where Chef Lee Ann Wong's hearty and playful brunch menu features Cornflake French Toast, Breakfast Bibimbap, and Poi Biscuits and Gravy that will sustain an afternoon on the beach. Splashes of guava, passion fruit, lychee, yuzu and pineapple are incorporated into light and fresh cocktails that will pick you up—but not put you out—for the day.

At **12th Ave Grill** (1120 12th Ave. 808-732-9469 12thavegrill.com), the aptly

named Lemon-Ginger-Mint features house-made ginger syrup muddled with fresh lemons, mint, and vodka. It's a popular choice when paired with island-raised grass-fed beef burgers, crispy duck wings, and Chef Kevin Hanney's signature smoked 'ahi spread.

Lucky Belly (50 N. Hotel St. 808-531-1888 luckybelly.com) in Honolulu's Chinatown is one of the best spots to sample the Asian influence of the islands' culinary scene. A dim sum-inspired appetizer menu features soy-glazed oxtail dumplings with hot mustard creme, lobster siu mai in a Meyer lemon beurre blanc, and pork belly bao (steamed buns). Owner Dusty Grable recommends sipping on The Switch, a beverage with the essence of kaffir lime, lemongrass, coconut, and a house-made galangal shrub. When you've had enough imbibing and munching, a steaming Lucky Bowl ramen will soothe you for the next day's fun.

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Gumbo Paradise

Thick, deeply flavored, and dangerously delicious, gumbo is a testament to Creole ingenuity and Cajun improvisation. We celebrate Louisiana's signature stew in all of its incarnations, from a sophisticated restaurant version with foie gras to rustic varieties that swim with andouille sausage and seasoned vegetables.

By Keith Pandolfi

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Home for the Harvest

A beloved family olive grove in Lebanon sets the scene for a feast of smoky *baba ghanouj* and flaky, *za'atar*-topped flatbreads drizzled with the season's first olive oil, plus lamb-stuffed eggplant, buttery date cookies, and more. *By Fouad Kassab*

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The New Classics

Get a taste of *SAVEUR*'s forthcoming cookbook with crowd-pleasing recipes for the season, including an egg-topped *salade Lyonnaise*, *Lady Baltimore* cake, and a cocktail that's out of this world. *By the Editors*



THIS MONTH ON THE WEB

Make the most of autumn's bounty with our expansive **fall produce guide**, full of buying, storing, and prep tips as well as fantastic seasonal recipes. Don't miss the full reveal of this year's **Culinary Travel Award** winners, plus *SAVEUR*-curated travel guides for top destinations. Stock your bar with our favorite cold-weather spirits, perfect for mixing into richly spiced **fall cocktails**. Find all this and more at SAVEUR.COM/FALLCOOKING



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ON THE COVER Roast chicken with saffron and lemon (see "The New Classics," [page 80](#)) Photograph by Ingalls Photography

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chaser, chasing
the ambulance.*

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Go Further



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What makes a dish “classic”? Twenty years’ worth of *SAVEUR* recipes holds the answer.

By James Oseland

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Announcing the winners of our second annual Culinary Travel Awards! Learn all about the hotels to dine in, the cruises to take, and the world’s most delicious destinations.

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Source

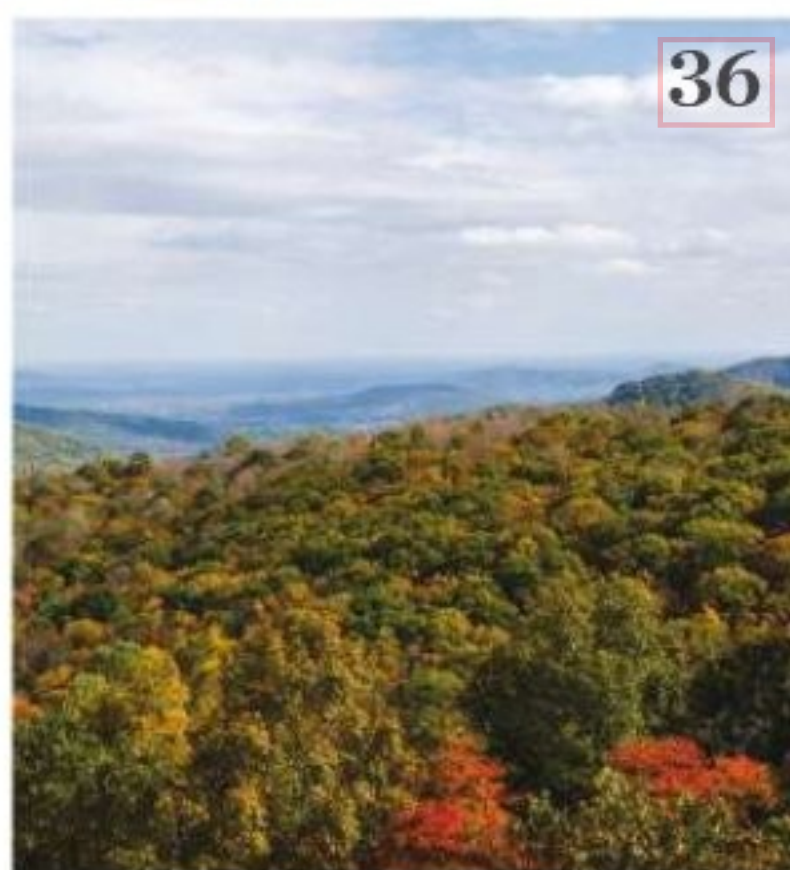
Sorghum, the smoky, syrupy Southern sweetener, belongs in every home kitchen. Just don’t call it molasses. *By Kevin West*

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The mountain byways along Virginia’s Skyline Drive offer top-notch apple pies, fried ham sandwiches, hot milk cake, and more.

By Jane and Michael Stern



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The Japanese kelp called kombu brings beautiful umami depth to a world of dishes.

By Hiroko Shimbo

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In fishing, as in life, it’s all about balance. *Photograph by Luis Marden/National Geographic Society/Corbis*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JAMES ROPER; INGALLS PHOTOGRAPHY (2); MICHAEL KRAUS; INGALLS PHOTOGRAPHY; JAMES ROPER

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The ★ denotes a Classic **SAVEUR** recipe. For more information, visit saveur.com/classic.



Hello Tomorrow



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FIRST
BY JAMES OSELAND
Illustration by Valero Doval



Cooking Up a Classic

What makes a dish a classic? It's the question I held in mind while editing *SAVEUR's The New Classics Cookbook*, which will be released at the end of this month. Like many of you, I know a classic when I taste one. I was 12 years old when I first ate duck à l'orange at Jacques, a great old Continental restaurant in Chicago. The dish was extraordinary, with a lacquered leg and fan of breast meat atop an amber-hued citrus sauce. In vogue since the 17th century, even on a mid-20th-century table it embodied the era of the development of French haute cuisine. When I took a bite, I felt as though I were transported in time.

In the years since, I've whisked myself back to my days of living in Indonesia by slow-cooking beef *rendang*; I've come to know Cincinnati through its famed chili, a tangle of pasta and cinnamon-scented beef. That's the thrill of classic dishes. They are edible archives of culture and history. More than simply delicious, they grant us a passport to locales both far and near. As cooks, we can deepen our understanding of place, including the very places we live in, by mastering these signature recipes—performing the same

techniques, working with the same ingredients, and reveling in the same flavors as countless cooks before us.

It's apt that *The New Classics Cookbook* debuts in our 20th year. For two decades, we have sought out these emblematic dishes; that joyful hunt is at the core of *SAVEUR*. You can find eight of the book's most wonderful recipes, including Irish stew and Lady Baltimore cake, in "A World of Classics," beginning on **page 80** of this issue (in which you might notice some striking design changes, thanks to our new design director, Adam Bookbinder). But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Packed between the covers of *The New Classics Cookbook* are a thousand beloved recipes, drawn from our ever-expanding collection of global dishes. You need only to cook them and taste them to understand why each is included. 🐦

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5

**GOLDEN
SPOON
AWARDS
IN 2014**



THE FOOD The culinary scene is currently exploding in South Walton. With five 2014 Golden Spoon winners, South Walton has the highest number of award-winning establishments per capita in Florida. The access to fresh Gulf seafood, as well as seasonal ingredients cultivated by a long growing season, creates a distinct culinary style. Four major wine festivals attract national winemakers to the region, and the sixth largest charity wine auction in the country takes place here.

THE ACTIVITIES Both on the beach and off, outdoor activities are naturally abundant in South Walton. Beyond traditional sunning and swimming, adventurous travelers will enjoy stand-up paddle boarding, kayaking or fishing in the stunning aqua-hued waters of the Gulf of Mexico or one of the area's rare coastal dune lakes.



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FARE

Tastes and Travel from the World of Food

The 2nd Annual **Culinary Travel Awards**

*We're thrilled to
announce the winners
of the SAVEUR Culinary
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filled cities, hotels, and tours
that have wowed our editors
and expert panelists with their
vibrancy, authenticity, and
uncompromising quality.
These are the places to
visit this year.*

Best Culinary Destinations **20** Best Markets & Shops **22** Best Cocktails & Drinks, Best Hotel Bar, Best Brewery
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Dishes at Emily restaurant in Brooklyn. Clockwise from top left: sugar snap peas with pecorino, lemon, and bottarga; royal beet sampler; crispy sprouts with radish, chiles, black sesame, and fish sauce; smoky carrots with lentils and ricotta; the William pizza; Love Potion cocktail; trumps with duck ragu; the Lady Pizza Girl; Du Sud cocktail.

BEST CULINARY DESTINATIONS

BROOKLYN • NEW ORLEANS • HONG KONG • COPENHAGEN

AN EMBARRASSMENT of riches—tasting menu hot-spots, international joints of all stripes, artisan producers, and neighborhood charmers like Emily restaurant (pictured above; pizzalovesemily.com)—make **Brooklyn** tops for Best Large Domestic Culinary Destination. **New Orleans** (Best Small Domestic Culinary Destination) spoils visitors with étouffée, shrimp rémoulade, oysters Rockefeller, and more Creole specialties. With over 11,000 restaurants, **Hong Kong** (Best Large International Culinary Destination) has a dish for every taste, from streetside pork noodle soup to roast goose with plum sauce at Lung King Heen, a bastion of haute Cantonese.

Copenhagen (Best Small International Culinary Destination), birthplace of new Nordic cuisine, draws food-lovers with world-class restaurants like Noma and Relæ.



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Clockwise from top left: Japanese laquerware; eels at Tsukiji market, Tokyo; chopsticks from Ginza Natsuno, Tokyo; knife from Tsukiji Masa-moto; loaves from Bread Lounge, Los Angeles; LA's Sarita's Pupuseria; Central Market, in LA; canelés from Proof Bakery, LA; bento box; chocolate from Bottega Louie, LA; cheeses from The Beverly Hills Cheese Shop; Japanese textile; global sodas from Galco's, LA.



BEST MARKETS & SHOPS

TOKYO • LOS ANGELES



THE FORMER SEAT of Japan's imperial government, **Tokyo** (Best Markets & Shops, International) has long been a center for craftwork, still evident at places like Tsukiji Masamoto (tsukijimasamoto.co.jp), a seventh-generation knife maker in the famed Tsukiji fish market, and Ginza Natsuno, which carries over 2,500 styles of chopsticks (e-ohashi.com). Opulent department stores like Isetan (isetan.mistore.jp) offer luxe textiles and tableware, while their food halls stock everything from rare sakes to rice-flour sweets. **Los Angeles** (Best Markets & Shops, Domestic) amazes with the diversity of its wares. Downtown, the vast Central Market (grandcentralmarket.com) beckons with peak-season produce and prepared food; throughout the city, purveyors deal in everything from vintage barware (Bar Keeper; barkeepersilverlake.com) to local cheeses (The Cheese Store of Beverly Hills; cheesestorebh.com). International neighborhoods contain a world's worth of deliciousness, like Koreatown's Kobawoo House for the charcuterie-style cold pork belly called pork bossam, and Highland Park's Feli-Mex Market, where there is always a line out the door for fresh corn tamales.

INGALLS PHOTOGRAPHY (LAQUERWARE; KNIFE; BENTO BOX); TODD COLEMAN (TSUKIJI MARKET); CENTRAL MARKET; ALLIE WIST (PUPUSERIA); ANDRE BARANOWSKI (ALL OTHERS); ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL HOEWELER

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Planet of the Grapes**MAKES 1 COCKTAIL**

This citrusy, floral drink mixes orange blossom-infused liqueur and vodka with chamomile syrup and sparkling wine. For hard-to-find ingredients, see [page 94](#).

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp. dried chamomile flowers
- Zest of 1 lemon, plus ½ oz. juice
- 1 oz. Pavan
- ¾ oz. Hangar 1 Mandarin Blossom vodka
- Prosecco, for topping
- Edible flower, for garnish (optional)

Boil sugar and 1 cup water in a 1-qt. saucepan; cook until sugar dissolves, 1–2 minutes. Stir in flowers and zest. Let syrup cool; strain. Combine ¾ oz. syrup, the juice, Pavan, and vodka in ice-filled shaker. Shake; strain into a flute. Top with prosecco; garnish with flower, if you like.



*Planet of the
Grapes cocktail*

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ON THE SURFACE, they couldn't seem more different: the glittering metropolis in the desert and the fog-shrouded city on the Thames. But in both **Las Vegas** (Best Cocktails & Drinks, Domestic) and **London** (Best Cocktails & Drinks, International), a drink at the bar is not just a pastime, it's an art form. In Las Vegas, home to our Best Hotel Bar—The Chandelier—drink culture goes big: Here are Aureole's 50,000-bottle wine cellar ([charliepalmer.com](#)); Freakin' Frog's 1,250-bottle-deep craft beer list ([freakinfrog.com](#)); and the widest range of watering holes, from newcomers like the Center Bar ([srlasvegas.com](#)) to Rat Pack haunts like Champagnes Cafe (702-737-1699). On the other side of the pond, classic spots like Rules, founded in 1798 and frequented by Charles Dickens ([rules.co.uk](#)), and dynamic newer bars like Artesian ([artesian-bar.co.uk](#)), serving fantastical libations like the Magician—a layered cocktail of becherovka, cherry liqueur, smoke, and jasmine—make London one intoxicating town.



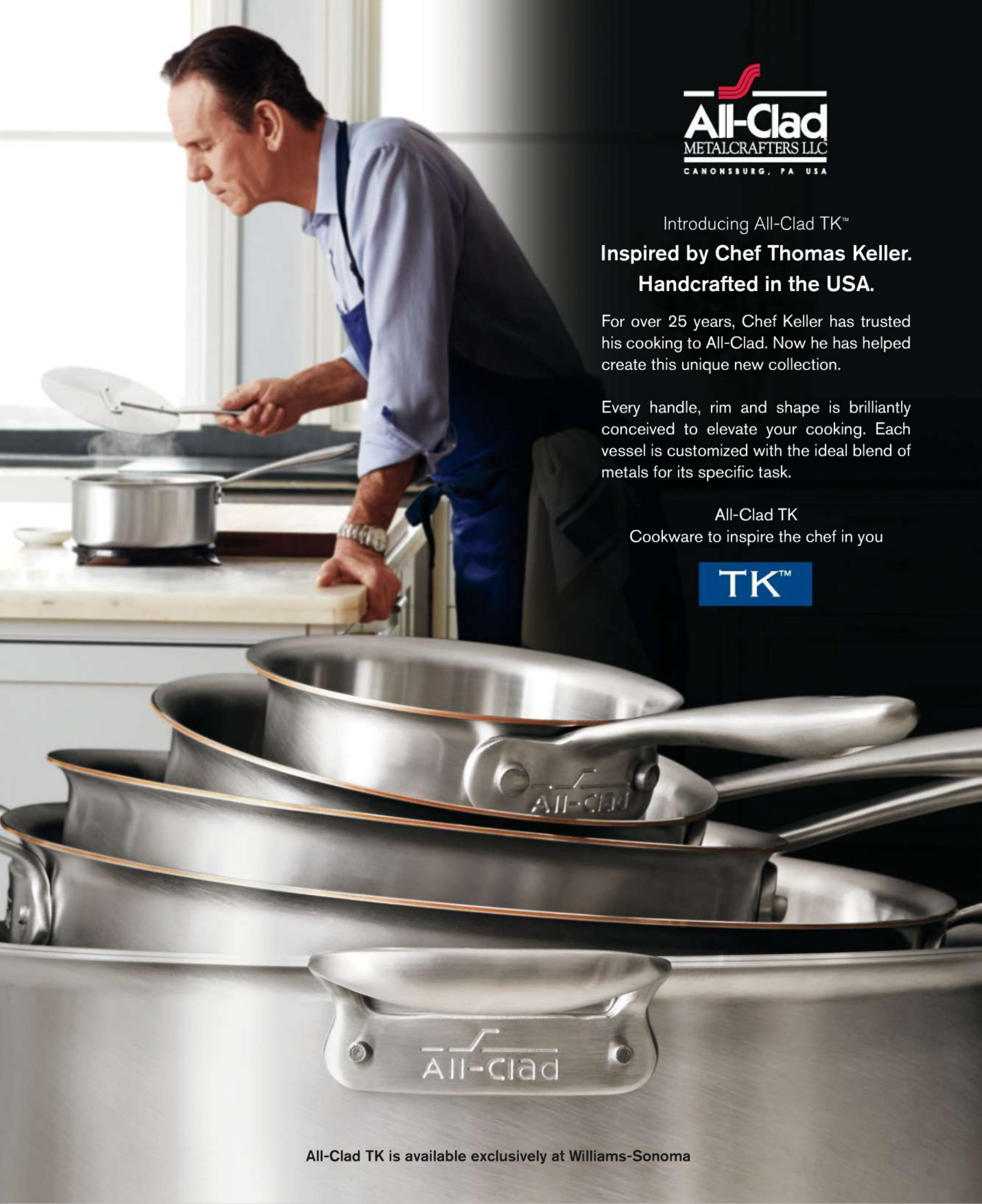
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BEST HOTEL RESTAURANT:
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**EPICURE AT
LE BRISTOL**
Paris

We'll be back for globally inspired dishes like breadcrumb-and-almond-crusted mackerel with piquillo peppers, tender, spinach-like tetragon greens, and curry oil at chef Eric Frechon's three-Michelin-starred restaurant. lebristolparis.com

BEST IN-ROOM
DINING

THE DORCHESTER
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The vast room service menu ranges from perfect Japanese breakfasts of miso soup, rice, and salmon to proper British grilled sole followed by a stellar bread-and-butter pudding. dorchestercollection.com

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THE RESTAURANT AT MEADOWWOOD

At this Napa Valley resort (meadowood.com), chef Christopher Kostow uses California's wild and raised bounty in fascinating ways to create some of the most astonishing and beautiful dishes we've ever eaten, like a composition of chilled abalone and baby root vegetables in a smoky broth (pictured) and a wood-fired squab flavored with pine needles and artfully paired with blackberries and foie gras butter.

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Seabourn Breadsticks

MAKES ABOUT 5 DOZEN

These buttery treats (at left) are popular among Seabourn passengers.

- 3½ cups flour
- 14 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
- ¾ oz. fresh yeast (see page 94)
- 1 tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ⅔ cup ice-cold water
- 1 egg, mixed with 1 tbsp. water
- Coarse salt, for sprinkling

1 Pulse flour, butter, yeast, sugar, and salt in a food processor into pea-sized crumbs. With the motor running, slowly add water until dough forms. Divide dough into 3 balls and wrap in plastic wrap; set in a warm place for 1 hour.

2 Heat oven to 350°. On a lightly floured surface, and working with 1 ball of dough at a time, roll dough until ⅜" thick; trim sides to make a 6"x12" rectangle. Slice lengthwise into ⅜"-thick breadsticks and transfer to parchment paper-lined baking sheets; gather and reuse scraps. Brush dough with egg wash and sprinkle with coarse salt; bake until golden and crisp, 10–12 minutes.



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SINGAPORE AIRLINES

Attentive service and dishes like the Thai red curry gain Singapore (singaporeair.com) **Best In-Flight Dining, Economy Class**. The airline's grand SilverKris Lounge at Changi Airport, Singapore, with its huge buffet, scores it **Best Airport Lounge**.



See the full list of this year's Culinary Travel Award winners, including the **Reader's Choice** winners, at SAVEUR.COM/CTA

EXPERT PANELISTS

The **SAVEUR** editors, with **Lidia Bastianich**, *SAVEUR* contributing editor, TV host, author, and restaurateur; **Rick Bayless**, *SAVEUR* contributing editor, chef, and restaurateur; **Arabella Bowen**, editor-in-chief, *Fodors Travel*; **Lillian Chou**, Beijing-based food writer and cook; **Mirra Fine and Daniel Klein**, co-creators, *The Perennial Plate*; **Eden Grinshpan**, host of *Eden Eats* and *Log On & Eat with Eden Grinshpan*; **Judy Joo**, host of *Korean Food Made Simple*; **Ariana Lindquist**, *SAVEUR* contributing photographer; **Alexander Lobrano**, *SAVEUR* contributing editor and author of *Hungry for France*; **Marco and Mauro Maccioni**, restaurateurs; **Kelsey Nixon**, host of *Kelsey's Essentials* and author of *Kitchen Confidence*; **Landon Nordeman**, *SAVEUR* contributing photographer; **Pavia Rosati**, founder and CEO, *Fathom Travel Guides*; **Ali Rosen**, founder and host of *Potluck Video*; **Kerrin Rousset**, food and travel writer and founder of *My Kugelhopf* and the *Sweet Zürich Tour*; **Arnie Weissman**, editor-in-chief, *Travel Weekly*; **Elettra Wiedemann**, founder, *Impatient Foodie*; **Michelle Young**, founder, *Untapped Cities*; and **THE SAVEUR TRAVEL ADVISORY BOARD**: **Candace Andreozzi**, *Post Haste Travel*; **Chad Clark**, *Chad Clark Travel Ventures*; **Anne Crawford**, *Coastline Travel*; **Betsy Donley**, *Camelback Odyssey Travel*; **Didi Johnson**, *Camelback Odyssey Travel*; **Sandee Litwin**, *Litwin Travel*; **Linda Marshall**, *CWT Vacations*; **Annie Nagler**, *Silver Sun Travel*; **Ken Neibaur**, *Cardoza Bungey Travel*; **Kristen Korey Pike**, *KK Travels Worldwide*; **Carol Rochlin**, *Protravel International*; **Colin Simpson**, *Into the Vineyard*; **Leah Smith**, *Tafari Travel*; **Pam Walker**, *Walker Adventures*; **Charles Wolfe**, *Hurley Travel Experts*.



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BY KEVIN WEST

Photograph by Michael Kraus

Mountain Gold

In Appalachia, a family-owned company builds on sorghum's sweet success

On an October morning, as the first frost crisped the pastures in east Tennessee, I drove from my home in Knoxville to the little town of Monterey to visit Pete Guenther. By the time I arrived, Pete and his family had been up for hours harvesting sorghum, a 5,000-year-old cereal crop brought to the New World from Africa during the slave trade. The Guenthers have grown the plant, *Sorghum bicolor* (L.) Moench, since 1981 on

ridge-top fields overlooking Muddy Pond Road, their mill's two-lane namesake. They grow it not for its grain, but because the stalks flow with a lightly sweet sap that, when boiled down, yields a thick syrup redolent of caramel and wood smoke.

From the sugar scarcity of the Civil War until the post-WWII spread of cheap refined sugar, this syrup was the primary sweetener used in the South. Now, after a century of decline, the

revival of small-scale sorghum production in the southern Appalachians is a symbol of cultural continuity, and a boon for those eager to get their hands on the stuff.

While it's often confused with molasses, a byproduct of sugar manufacturing, sorghum has a sweeter, cleaner flavor. But it can be used in any recipe where molasses is called for. As I drove away from the Guenthers' farm, amber-filled bottles rattling beside me, I thought

of all the dishes I'd swap it into: molasses cookies, gingerbread, and baked beans. I'd dollop it onto grilled meats and stir it into stewed vegetables for a hit of earthy sweetness. Still, like any Appalachian traditionalist, I think the best way to enjoy it is on a hot buttered biscuit. But as Guenther says, "There's hardly anything you could put it on and go wrong." Muddy Pond sorghum syrup is \$7 per pint at muddypondsorghum.net.

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A special thanks to Bellagio, our gracious host, and to Highland Park, Le Creuset, Talenti Gelato e Sorbetto, and Zonin Prosecco.

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ROUTES

BY JANE AND MICHAEL STERN

Photographs by James Roper

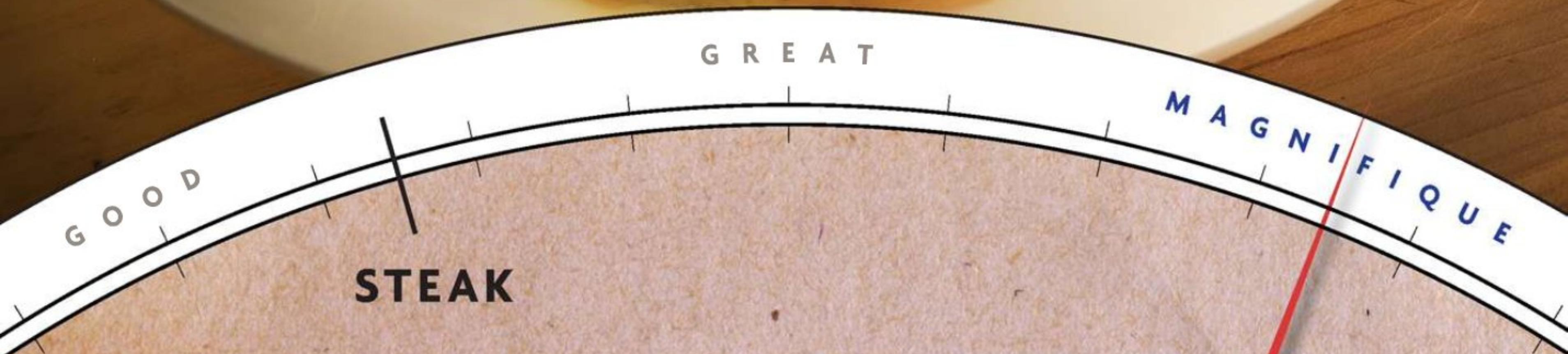


Best of the Blue Ridge

On Virginia's mountain highway, the sky's the limit for homegrown eats

We happened to cruise into the town of Fulks Run, in northwestern Virginia, on what devotees know as Fried Ham Friday. What luck! One day each week, the big table at the back of Fulks Run Grocery, a small provisions store, is cleared so that people can sit down and eat sandwiches at what normally serves as the ham shipping department for Turner Ham House. The legendary hams, made by Ron Turner using his great-grandfather's formula, are dry-cured with sugar, salt, and saltpeter. They come enveloped in a fragrant cloud of titillating

Clockwise from top: Red Truck Bakery's Dutch apple pie; chocolate moonshine, chocolate, and apple cakes; mincemeat and pecan pies. Right: Skyline Drive.



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ROUTES⁷

Beyond Skyline Drive



Clockwise from left: Co-owner Nancy McCarthy with a shaved country ham and arugula pizza at Dr. Ho's Humble Pie; cream puffs at Triple Oak Bakery; Garnett Turner, founder of Turner Ham House; Virginia fall foliage.

porcine perfume, and they deliver the exquisite salty-sweet punch for which Virginia hams are famous. On Fridays, nickel-thick slices are first soaked in water to mellow their intensity; then they are lightly breaded and fried crisp in an electric skillet. There are no condiments, no adornment whatsoever, and no side dishes—just a sheaf of exquisite brick-red meat in a spongy bun. This sandwich costs \$3.50, an astounding bargain.

Fulks Run is west of the Thornton Gap entrance of Virginia's Skyline Drive, the 105-mile, two-lane road that threads through the Shenandoah National Park. Cruising along it, and neighboring roads, we found ample opportunities to partake of the area's fabulous foods. This is Blue Ridge Mountains food,

a comforting mix of 18th-century English and African-American traditions brought to bear upon such local ingredients as blue-ribbon hogs and backwoods moonshine. Fried chicken, biscuits, and peanut soup are passions here, too, as is baking with mountain-grown apples.

Ten minutes from the town of Front Royal at the highway's northern terminus, we pulled into The Apple House, a deli that takes full advantage of the local crop in velvety, crunchy-skinned apple-butter donuts plastered with cinnamon sugar. Apple fritters, sugar-glazed and chockful of fruit, are equally marvelous. Both, we discovered, are good car snacks while traveling along the mountains' crest. But we needed to sit down

to eat the housemade apple dumpling. It's a muddled mess of soft-baked Golden Delicious apples, buttery pie crust, and caramel glaze that demands a fork, and it's delicious enough to warrant unwavering concentration, especially in autumn, when Virginia apples are at their peak.

The second day of our trip, we got a big taste of the region's fare and its culture at the Hi Neighbor Restaurant in Strasburg, just 20 minutes west of Front Royal. We took a seat in an upholstered '50s-style booth with

Contributing editors JANE and MICHAEL STERN are the authors of roadfood.com. Their most recent article for SAVEUR was "Hot Country" (June/July 2014).



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a view of buck trophies on the wood-paneled walls and the communal table where locals convene for morning coffee klatches. This neighborhood eatery features breakfast meats from Crabill's in nearby Toms Brook. Here is scrapple that is a perfect balance of ground pork, cornmeal, and flour, sliced from a loaf and fried to a crisp. Sausage patties are rough-hewn and succulent. You can even order that farm-country favorite, puddin' meat, which our waitress described as "like scrapple, but without the cornmeal." The texture of soft oatmeal, puddin' meat is best enjoyed on pancakes or waffles, topped with a scattering of raw onion. It is enough of a local delicacy to warrant the sign above a shelf of boxed cereals that boasts, WE HAVE PUDDIN' MEAT.

"Is the chicken skillet-fried?" we asked a member of the Hi Neighbor staff taking a coffee break at the Formica counter. "It sure is," she replied. "And I know, because I'm the one who cleans the skillets!" We



From left: A diner at Hi Neighbor; hot milk cake (see facing page for recipe) from Dr. Ho's Humble Pie.

ordered it right away. It was a straightforward flour-battered bird with no folderol or fancy seasoning. Its perfectly brittle crust was modestly salted, its dark meat immodestly luscious. The country ham here was good, too: Big slabs of it were chewy and well-aged, their lip-smacking saltiness balanced by a spill of sweet, stewed apples on top.

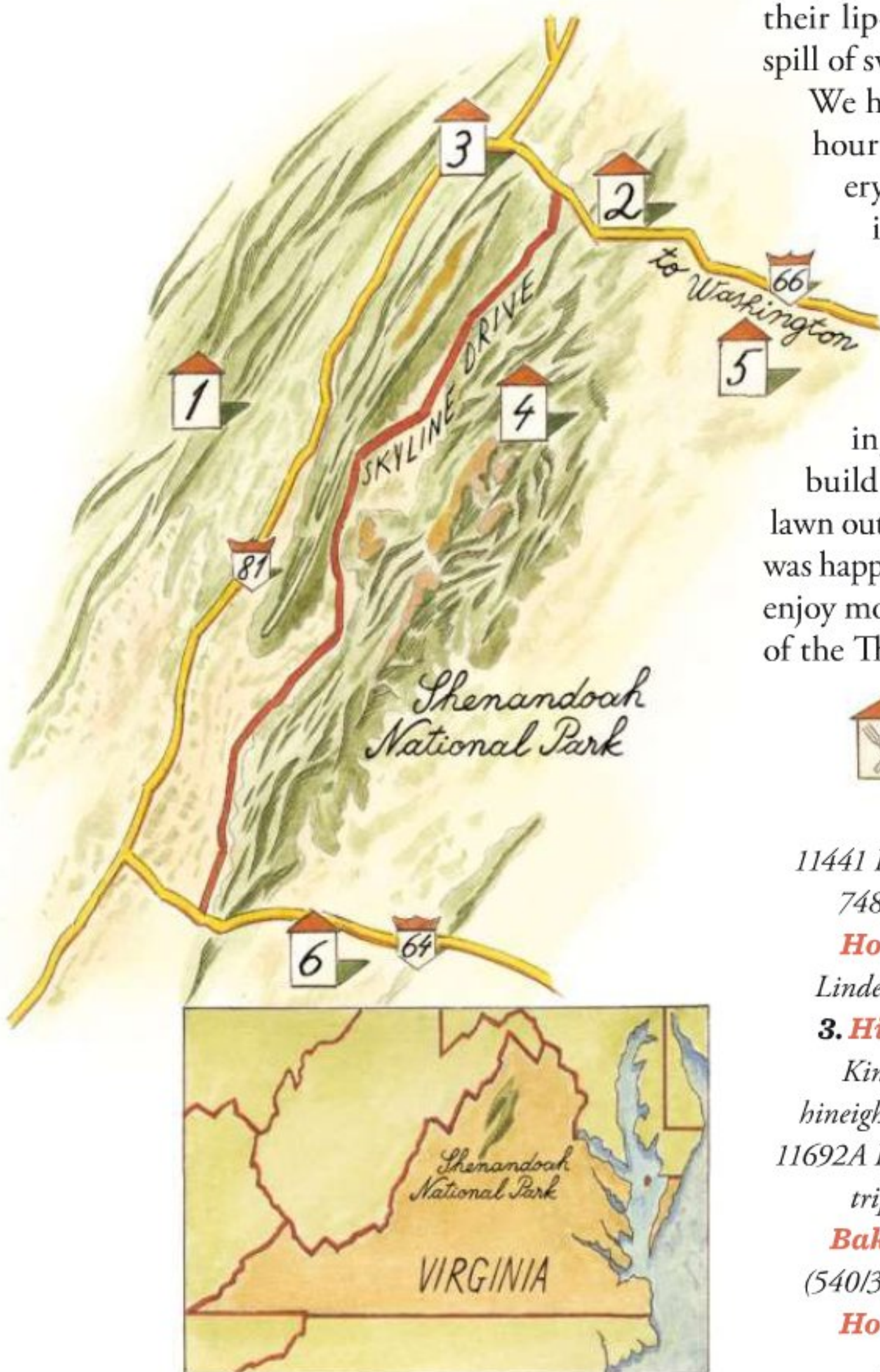
We headed south afterward, driving an hour or so until we hit Triple Oak Bakery, in Sperryville. Although this shop is just barely a restaurant, we discovered no nicer opportunity to savor the easy-going rural foodways of the Blue Ridge. As at the Fulks Run Grocery, there is no dining room (although there are plans to build one), but the one-room store has a lawn out back where baker Brooke Parkhurst was happy to set up folding chairs so we could enjoy mocha cake and apple pie by the bank of the Thornton River. There, we heard the

strident call of a crow. But it was not a crow; it was Parkhurst calling like one. Within seconds, a small murder of black birds arrived to perch on nearby branches and toddle across the lawn. Parkhurst and the crows were deep in conversation, cawing back and forth, and when she noticed our puzzled expressions, she said, "I speak fish crow, not regular crow," as if that explained things. She did tell us that the flock is fond of her because she feeds them pieces of cream puff.

Our favorite of all pastry sources turned out to be Red Truck Bakery, which we found in Warrenton, east of Sperryville, in a renovated 1921 Esso gas station. Red Truck's Brian Noyes bakes intriguing specialties: double-chocolate cake laced with Culpeper County moonshine; sweet-potato bourbon-pecan pie; and, in the fall, Shenandoah apple cake, a maple syrup-glazed Bundt cake made with fresh apples, apple cider, and apple sauce. It's a sweet prelude to a spin through Horse Country, the nation's premier source of fox-hunting apparel, located just around the corner.

The big surprise of our trip, however, came twenty minutes east of North Garden, at Dr. Ho's Humble Pie. This hip, happy place, decorated like an old garage, makes pizza with a Shenandoah Valley twist. Atop the chewy-crusted pie is a crown of lemon-laced fresh arugula along with shavings of parmesan and the corker: curls of country ham from Turner Ham House back up in Fulks Run. It is a bewitching combo, the ham a fine Virginia analog of prosciutto di Parma.

Even more than the kitchen's Virginia-accented pizza, what really endeared us to Dr. Ho's is that it serves hot milk cake. A



The Guide

1. Fulks Run Grocery:

11441 Brocks Gap Road, Fulks Run (540/896-7487; turnerhams.com)

2. The Apple

House 4675 John Marshall Highway, Linden (540/636-6329; theapplehouse.net)

3. Hi Neighbor Restaurant

192 West King Street, Strasburg (540/465-9187; hineighborva.com)

4. Triple Oak Bakery

11692A Lee Highway, Sperryville (540/987-9122; tripleoakbakery.com)

5. Red Truck

Bakery 22 Waterloo Street, Warrenton (540/347-2224; redtruckbakery.com)

6. Dr.

Ho's Humble Pie 4916 Plank Road, North Garden (434/245-0000)

farmhouse classic, this ivory-hued cake is such a straightforward dessert that it rarely appears on restaurant menus and is often referred to, even in vintage cookbooks, as “old fashioned.” Made right, as it is here, with a fluffy white crumb and an uncomplicated buttercream frosting, it is moist and egg-rich—a mother’s-hug Dixie treat.

Without a wisp of appetite remaining, we left Dr. Ho’s heading for the southern end of Skyline Drive, which also happens to be the northern start to the Blue Ridge Parkway, another beautiful mountain road that led us to a treasure-trove of barbecue parlors. But that is for another story. 🐾

★ Hot Milk Cake

SERVES 10-12

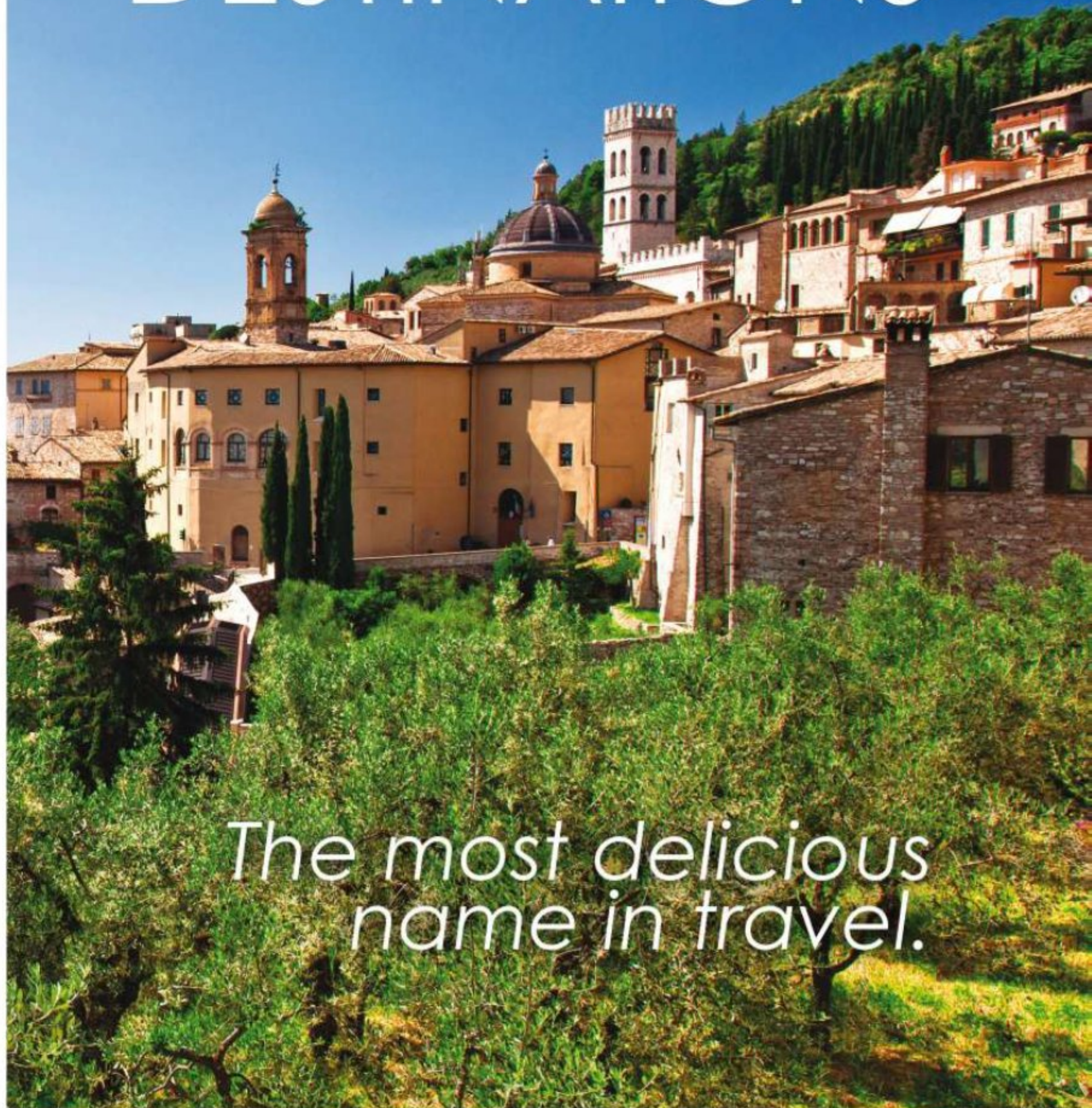
Scalded milk produces a moist crumb, and buttercream frosting enhances the richness of this simple yet stunning classic (pictured on facing page) from Dr. Ho’s Humble Pie in North Garden, Virginia.

- 1¼ cups whole milk
- 2½ tbsp. vanilla extract
- 3 cups flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 lb. unsalted butter, softened, plus more for greasing
- 3 cups sugar
- 5 eggs
- 1 1-lb. box confectioners’ sugar

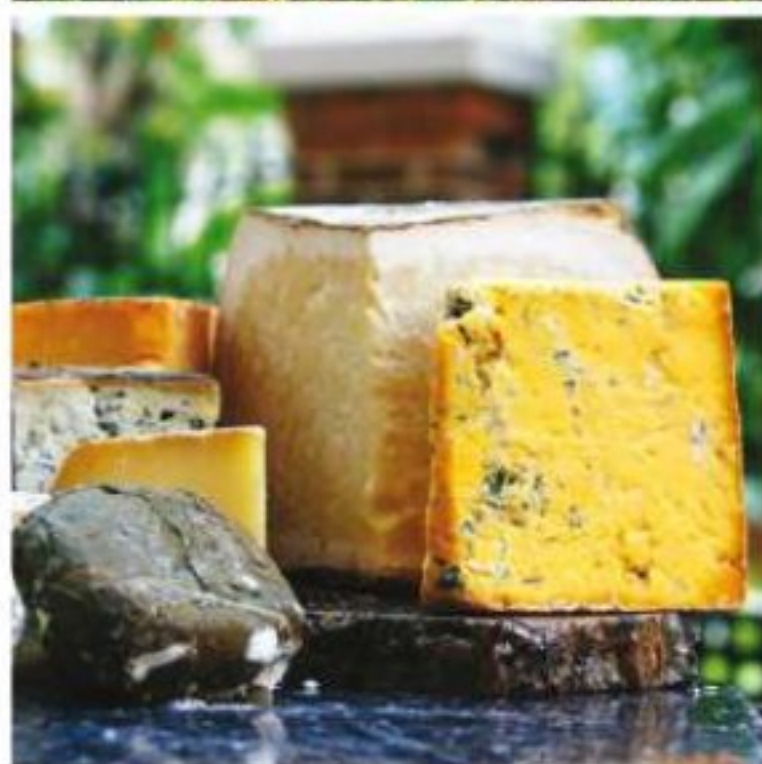
1 Heat oven to 325°. Bring 1 cup milk to a simmer in a 1-qt. saucepan; remove from heat and add 2 tbsp. vanilla. Whisk flour, baking powder, and salt in a bowl; set aside. In another bowl, and using an electric hand mixer, beat $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. butter and the sugar until combined. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. With the motor running, slowly add dry ingredients until combined. Drizzle in milk mixture until a smooth batter forms. Pour batter into a greased 9”-round, 2½”-deep cake pan; bake until a toothpick inserted into center of cake comes out clean, 1–1½ hours. Let cool slightly, then invert onto a wire rack; let cool completely and transfer to a cake stand.

2 Using an electric hand mixer with clean beaters, beat remaining milk, vanilla, and butter in a bowl until combined. With the motor running, slowly add confectioners’ sugar until a smooth frosting forms; spread evenly over cake. Chill 20 minutes before serving.

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When I was growing up in Tokyo, my mother would start every day with the same ritual. Each morning she would heat a pot of water, then slip in stiff, dried leaves of kombu, an edible Japanese seaweed, which she simmered until the water turned golden and a gentle, briny aroma filled the kitchen. The broth, with its mild umami flavor, was a constant presence in our home. My mother ladled it into virtually everything: *tori no mizutaki*, a hot pot of chicken; *chawanmushi*, a delicate, savory egg custard; and her favorite, *yudofu*, a block of soft, fresh tofu warmed in kombu stock.

Though it has very little flavor on its own, ranging in taste from mildly saline to sweetly vegetal, kombu broth has the remarkable effect of accentuating the flavors, and the sheer deliciousness, of anything cooked in it, magically making each ingredient taste like the most potent version of itself. This flavor-boosting power comes from

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INGREDIENT

Kombu

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Clockwise from left: vegetables pickled in kelp vinegar; dashi-braised chicken with vegetables; makombu-squash soup; kombu and squid steamed rice (see recipes on page 44.)



glutamate, the molecule responsible for the savory “fifth taste,” umami. In fact, scientists first identified umami while studying edible kelp, which has the highest known concentration of glutamate on the planet.

No wonder the Japanese have been cooking with kelp for more than a millennium; its earliest documented use dates back to the 800s. Today it is most popular in dashi, an enhanced stock for which *katsuobushi*—flakes of dried skipjack tuna—or dried shiitake mushrooms are steeped with kombu, activating the umami compound.

Most of Japan’s kombu is farmed along the 2,671-mile coast of Hokkaido, the country’s northernmost island. It’s pulled from the ocean in late summer and laid out to dry in the sun.

HIROKO SHIMBO is the author of *Hiroko’s American Kitchen* (Andrews McMeel, 2012). Her most recent article for *SAVEUR* was “Chawanmushi” (October 2012).

After four days, the leaves’ frilled edges are trimmed. Then the leaves dry for one month more before they’re sent to stores, long rigid ribbons of brownish green.

For most of my life, I used kombu the way my mother did, almost without thinking. Subtle but indispensable, it was as essential to our lives as air. Then, in 1999, I moved to New York.

My mother warned me that I might not be able to find kombu in the States, so I brought it with me, lining my suitcase with layers of dried kelp. At first, I just used it in traditional Japanese preparations, but after a few years, I began to see new possibilities.

One day, I decided to try kombu stock to braise short ribs and root vegetables. The result was intensely beefy, but somehow still lighter and cleaner in flavor than if I’d used a meat-based stock. From then on, the opportunities seemed endless. It was a natural fit for poaching fish, as it accentuated the fresh, oceanic flavors. Paired

with shiitakes, it heightened the mushrooms’ earthy notes. And in a simple puréed zucchini soup, the stock elevated and unified subtle flavors, just as it had for my mother’s *yudofu*.

In addition to yielding extraordinary stock, kombu leaves make a great condiment. Simmered, shredded kelp tossed with soy sauce, sesame seeds, and brown sugar becomes kombu *tsukudani*. Pungent and salty-sweet, it’s wonderful alongside white rice or as a snack with beer or sake. I have also taken to adding strands of kombu to vinegar to amp up brine for pickled radishes. The more I cook with it, the more I realize how versatile it is. Today, I have found equal footing in Western and Japanese cooking, and kombu plays a central role in both.

It also turns out that I needn’t have worried about locating the ingredient in the United States. Though *makombu*, the highest grade of kombu, can be hard to find, I recently discovered a

finely shredded *makombu* made by the venerable Matsumaeya Company, which has been producing kelp in Osaka since 1912. The shredded *makombu* releases more flavor and is easier to store and to work with than the large fronds I was accustomed to. I immediately sent a packet to my mother in Tokyo. She loved it even more than I had, and, after finishing the bag, scoured her neighborhood shops for more, only to learn that the product was not available in Japan. I now send shredded *makombu*—harvested in Hokkaido, processed in Osaka, and distributed in the U.S.—back around the world to her, chuckling each time at the twist of fate that has brought my relationship with this ingredient full circle. 🐸

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METHOD

✪ Ichiban Dashi (Kelp Stock)

In this version of the Japanese staple, clear stock is prepared using shredded sheets of *makombu* (high-quality dried kelp, see [page 94](#)) and bonito flakes (shavings of sun-dried, smoked skipjack tuna fillets, see [page 94](#)). The first extraction of the kelp will yield the most intense broth, called the first stock. To make it, bring 1 gallon water and 2 oz. shredded *makombu* to a gentle boil in a 6-qt. saucepan. Using a slotted spoon, remove *makombu*. (You can save it for another stock, but note that the flavor will not be as pronounced.) Add 1 1/4 cups bonito flakes. As soon as stock comes to a boil, remove from heat and strain. Chill up to 4 days or freeze in ice cube trays up to 1 month. Makes 14 cups. —K.E.

Dashi-Braised Chicken with Root Vegetables

SERVES 4

At the Los Angeles restaurant *n/naka*, chef Niki Nakayama uses dashi for a hearty braise of chicken thighs and root vegetables (pictured on [page 42](#)).

- 4 boneless, skin-on chicken thighs
- 1/4 cup sake (see [page 94](#))
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, cut into 1" pieces
- 8 medium shiitake mushrooms, stems discarded
- 2 medium turnips, peeled and cut into 1" pieces

- 2 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 1" pieces
- 1 carrot, cut into 1" pieces
- 4 scallions, 2 minced, 2 thinly sliced on an angle
- 1 1" piece ginger, peeled and grated
- 2 cups ichiban dashi (see recipe at left)
- 2 tbsp. mirin (Japanese rice wine; see [page 94](#))
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 2 tsp. sesame seeds, lightly toasted, for garnish (optional)
- 8 oz. fresh or frozen and defrosted squid, bodies cleaned, halved lengthwise, and cut crosswise 1/2" thick, tentacles left whole
- 2 oz. shredded *makombu* (see [page 94](#))
- 2 cups short grain rice, rinsed until water runs clear, and drained
- 3 tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 3" piece ginger, peeled and julienned
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped parsley, for garnish (optional)

1 Rub chicken with half each the sake and soy sauce in a bowl; cover with plastic wrap and chill 30 minutes.

2 Heat oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high. Cook chicken, flipping once, until browned, 8–10 minutes. Using tongs, transfer chicken to a bowl; set aside. Add onion to pan; cook until soft, 6–8 minutes. Add mushrooms, turnips, potatoes, and carrot; cook until vegetables are just tender, 15–18 minutes. Stir in remaining sake, the minced scallions, and the ginger; cook 2 minutes. Add dashi; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium; add reserved chicken and its juices, the mirin, and salt. Cook, slightly covered, until chicken is cooked through, about 25 minutes. Divide chicken between 4 shallow bowls and ladle soup over top; garnish with sliced scallions and, if you like, toasted sesame seeds.

Kombu and Squid Steamed Rice

SERVES 4–6

This one-pot sticky rice dish (pictured on [page 42](#)) from chef Tadashi Ono combines sweet squid, spicy ginger, and umami-boosting shredded *makombu*.

Bring squid, *makombu*, rice, soy sauce, ginger, and 2 cups water to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan. Reduce heat to low; cook, covered, until rice is tender, about 30 minutes. Let sit 10 minutes, then uncover and stir. Transfer to bowls; garnish with parsley, if you like.

Makombu-Squash Soup

SERVES 4

End-of-season zucchini and yellow squash can be replaced with any root vegetable—carrots, turnips, leeks, potatoes—to make this silky, umami-rich soup (pictured on [page 42](#)) from author Hiroko Shimbo.

- 4 cups ichiban dashi (see recipe at left)
- 1 large green zucchini, roughly chopped
- 1 large yellow squash, roughly chopped
- 1 small white onion, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup fresh or frozen peas
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Sliced chives, for garnish (optional)

Bring dashi to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan. Reduce heat to medium-low; stir in zucchini, squash, and onion. Cook, cov-

ered, until vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Add peas; cook 1–2 minutes more. Stir in oil and salt. Let soup cool slightly, then working in two batches, purée soup until very smooth. Serve warm or chilled; garnish with chives, if you like.

Vegetables Pickled in Kelp Vinegar

SERVES 4–6

Although we use radishes, cucumbers, and carrots, any sturdy vegetables, such as peppers, cauliflower, and onions, can be put up in this flavorful brine (pictured on [page 42](#)).

- 2 1/2 tbsp. sea salt
- 12 small radishes, halved
- 4 small Kirby cucumbers, halved lengthwise
- 2 carrots, halved lengthwise and halved crosswise
- 2 cups ichiban dashi (see recipe at left)
- 1 tbsp. whole black peppercorns
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. soy sauce
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar

1 Mix 1 tbsp. salt, the radishes, cucumbers, carrots, and 4 cups water in a bowl. Place a plate over top of vegetables to submerge them; cover with plastic wrap and chill at least 3 hours or up to overnight.

2 Bring dashi and peppercorns to a boil in a 1-qt. saucepan. Stir in remaining salt, the sugar, and soy sauce; cook until the sugar dissolves, 1–2 minutes. Add vinegar and bring to a simmer; let cool completely. Drain reserved vegetables and pack tightly into two sterilized 1-qt. glass jars. Pour stock mixture over vegetables and cover with lids; chill 2 days before serving. Store up to 3 months in the refrigerator.

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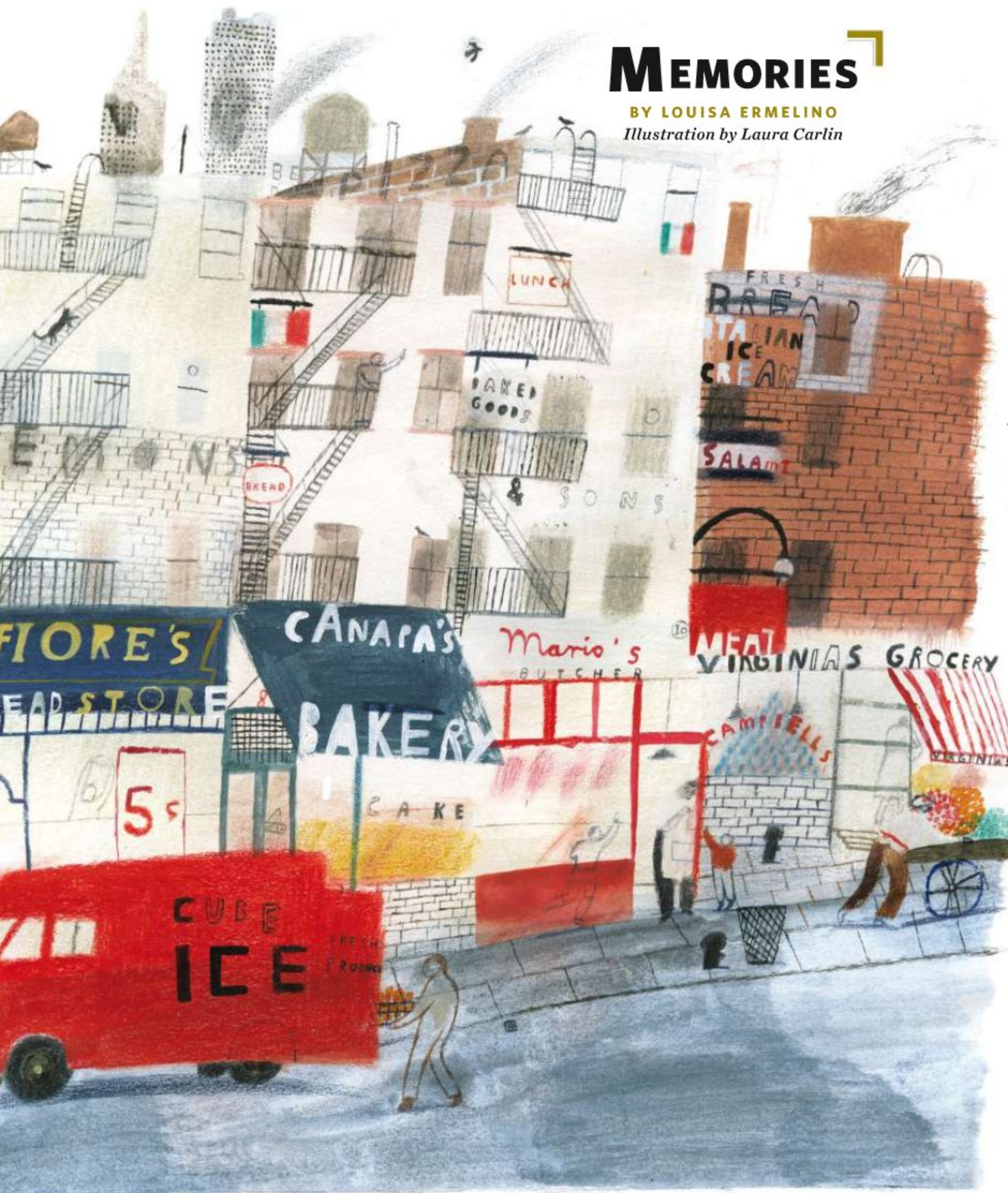
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MEMORIES

BY LOUISA ERMELINO

Illustration by Laura Carlin



Growing Up Italian in New York's South Village



Learning to love—and trying to preserve—the disappearing foodways of a childhood home

I was raised in the neighborhood I live in, the “South Village,” a heavily Italian area in downtown Manhattan, below Washington Square. Both of my parents grew up here. His family was from Genoa, hers from Naples. It was love at first sight. My father was good with numbers, which is what they say about the Genoese. He became a bootlegger with a calling card that said “just in case,” but moved on to fuel oil distribution with an office on Sullivan Street. In 1953 he bought a building on Prince Street for three thousand dollars that he borrowed from his mother, who had saved it in five bankbooks over 30 years. We moved into the first floor when I was eight.

Today, the neighborhood is SoHo, a fancy Manhattan address. I pass Jake Gyllenhaal on my way up MacDougal Street, and Louis CK is my neighbor a block down. People line up for cronuts outside the Dominique Ansel Bakery on Spring Street.

But back then, everyone in the neighborhood lived close together, three generations in one-bedroom apartments, sleeping in beds that by day were folded in half and propped in the corner, covered to look like upholstered furniture. In our building, owned by Mr. LaCapria, who shipped his Cadillac to Italy each summer so he could parade it around his hometown, our mothers went in and out of each other's kitchens. We ate wonderful food that we took for granted.

Mario the butcher gave us slices of salami as our mothers waited for their orders. At Di Fiore's, trays of pizza with tomato sauce, or focaccia with onions and olive oil, sat on the counter for five cents a square. We were always hoping for a middle piece, but we knew better than

LOUISA ERMELINO is a novelist and the reviews director for Publishers Weekly. This is her first article for *SAVEUR*.

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MEMORIES

Growing Up in Little Italy



to ask. Lemon's candy store was where we got lemon ice, wax lips, and the Spalding balls we kept losing on rooftops. We bought fresh mozzarella and ricotta from Joe's Dairy.

We ate fish on Fridays from the fishmongers on Bleecker Street: *baccalà* with olives and celery, eels that my grandmother fried in pieces. We had parties for baptisms and communions and confirmations and graduations; we ate platters of cold cuts and olives and cheese, trays of lasagna and veal with peppers, and everyone

was welcome, the doors to the apartments left open.

I can wax nostalgic; I can do it all day—about Sundays, after Mass, when we'd line up at Canapa's for coffee cakes; about June, when the Feast of St. Anthony meant zeppole fried in oil and dusted with powdered sugar. But the truth is that while I gloried in my childhood, I also wanted to get the hell out of that place.

I listened to my mother and the neighborhood ladies who sat in our kitchen or on park benches or on blankets when we took the subway to Coney Island, toting paper bags of eggplant parmigiana sandwiches and peppers and eggs, the bread wet with oil. I listened to them gossip. No one was spared. The stories were always about sex: Mr. LaCapria, the landlord, who went to Italy at 60 and came back with a teenaged bride; the woman on the fifth floor whose daughter got pregnant, and whose connected uncle sent messengers to beat the guy up, but the guy turned out to be married, so there was no way to really make it right; the wise guy who had his lover's husband thrown off the roof. They were endless stories, looped over and over.

I decided that my life was not going to be fodder for neighborhood talk. I knew I had to act early. My aunt's next-door neighbor's son knocked up his girlfriend in sixth grade; they got married, had the kid, and moved in with my aunt's neighbor. So I chose an unpopular high school, Holy Cross Academy, near the porn theaters in Times Square. I found myself a best friend from the East Village who was Ukrainian. I took to that culture like a duck to water. Pierogi? You bet. She had never seen an artichoke. The boys were tall and blond and thought I was exotic. I went away for college, a neighborhood no-no, and from there I left. I lived in Europe, India, Southeast Asia. I ate beef bourguignon and curry, and noodles dressed in peanut sauce instead of tomato gravy.

I traveled for five years, and then I hit a wall. I couldn't get settled anywhere. Except, it turned out, in the neighborhood.

I came home. When my French boyfriend came through on his way to South America, hoping to bring me along, I turned him down. Then I married a man from one block away. We didn't know each other growing up, but our families went back generations. I knew his gossip. The cousin who was left at the altar, the aunt whose lover would visit in the afternoon for a "matinee." I amazed myself that I had gone so far and ended up back on Prince Street with an Italian-American neighborhood husband with a gaggle of relatives in one

building. We moved in across the street from my mother, and we raised our children there.

But the neighborhood I'd left was changing. It was the 1970s. Artists were moving into the factory buildings where my aunts and uncles had worked. At first, the newcomers were just a source of amusement. There were still places I recognized, where people knew what part of Italy we came from, which funeral home we waked our dead in. At holidays, the "SoHo people" went home, and we jammed shoulder to shoulder in the local shops, clutching paper numbers, waiting to pick up our orders and get home to cook.

We had parties for baptisms and confirmations; we ate platters of cold cuts, olives, and cheese, trays of lasagna and veal, and everyone was welcome

Joe's Dairy was still there, though it had been passed from Joe to his protégé, Anthony Campanelli. At the dawn of SoHo, Anthony started making smoked mozzarella that the newly minted residents thought was the Second Coming. No one from the neighborhood had ever even heard of smoked mozzarella.

The Vesuvio Bakery on Prince Street, opened in 1920, was still there, too, its lime-green storefront a source of endless fascination for camera-wielding tourists. That's where we bought our *taralli*, hard pepper biscuits, to dip in coffee. But with each passing year, the neighborhood receded. Vesuvio closed its doors for good in 2009, Joe's Dairy in 2013.

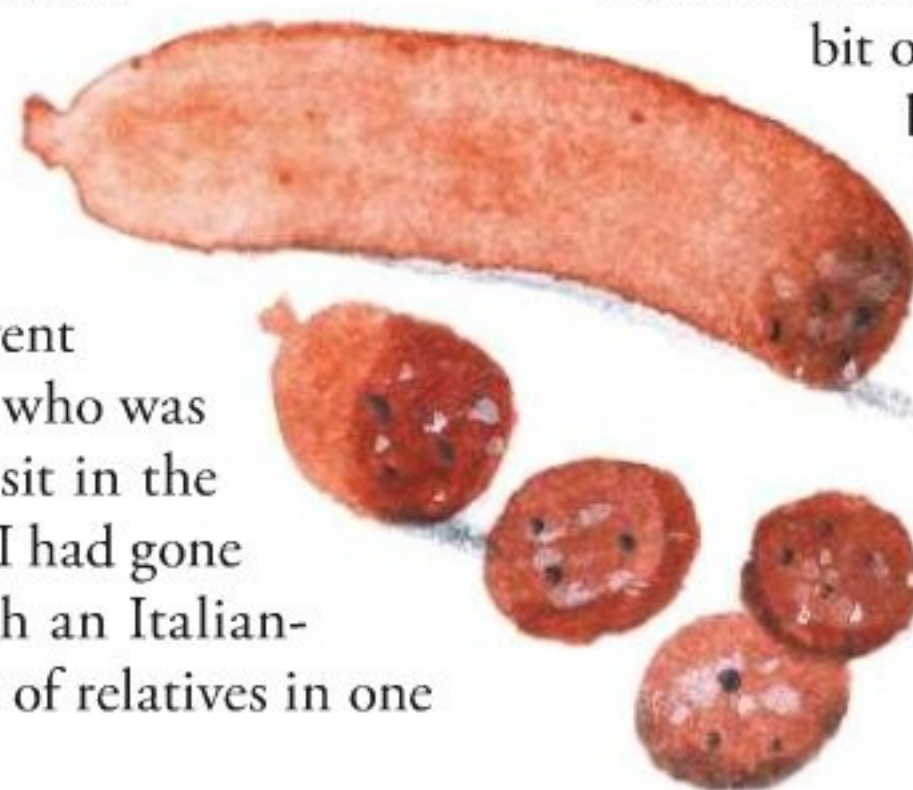
So I figured, in the end, I'd better embrace the old ways, because there weren't many of us left. I learned how to bake the Easter *piena*, loaded with cheese, eggs, and sausage. I make my

grandmother's ravioli, stuffed with cream cheese and spinach that I mince with beef, veal, and pork. But I miss the old days of the St. Anthony Feast, with my mother's cronies sitting at a table selling church raffle tickets. I miss Joe's Dairy, with the curling photos of family and friends Scotch-taped onto the register.

I watch people wizen, pick up canes, disappear. Johnny "Eyes," who washed dishes at Arturo's pizzeria, still walks around. I always say hello. "Louisa," he says, "There's nobody left." Johnny "Eyes" has been saying this for years, and the truth of it has finally caught up with him.

They shoot movies here. It's crowded with boutiques. I go out to buy milk, and I come home with shoes. My mother would have said "benedeeg," a mishmash of American-tainted Neapolitan dialect that loosely means, "good for you." Still, I try to re-create a

bit of what I once had hoped to escape. Last year, we baptized my grandson at St. Anthony's on Sullivan Street. He wore a white christening gown and took for his middle name Amedeo, after my father. The priest, in his sermon, admitted he'd finally scored a cronut. Then we threw a party in our place on Prince Street. We served eggplant and baked ziti and sausage. Everyone was invited. I sat with the other "ladies" and gossiped a little.





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A top-down view of a white bowl filled with a rich, dark brown gumbo. The gumbo is thick and contains visible pieces of fried chicken, andouille sausage, and okra. A mound of white rice is placed in the center, topped with sliced green onions. A silver spoon is partially submerged in the gumbo on the left side of the bowl. The bowl sits on a dark, textured wooden surface.

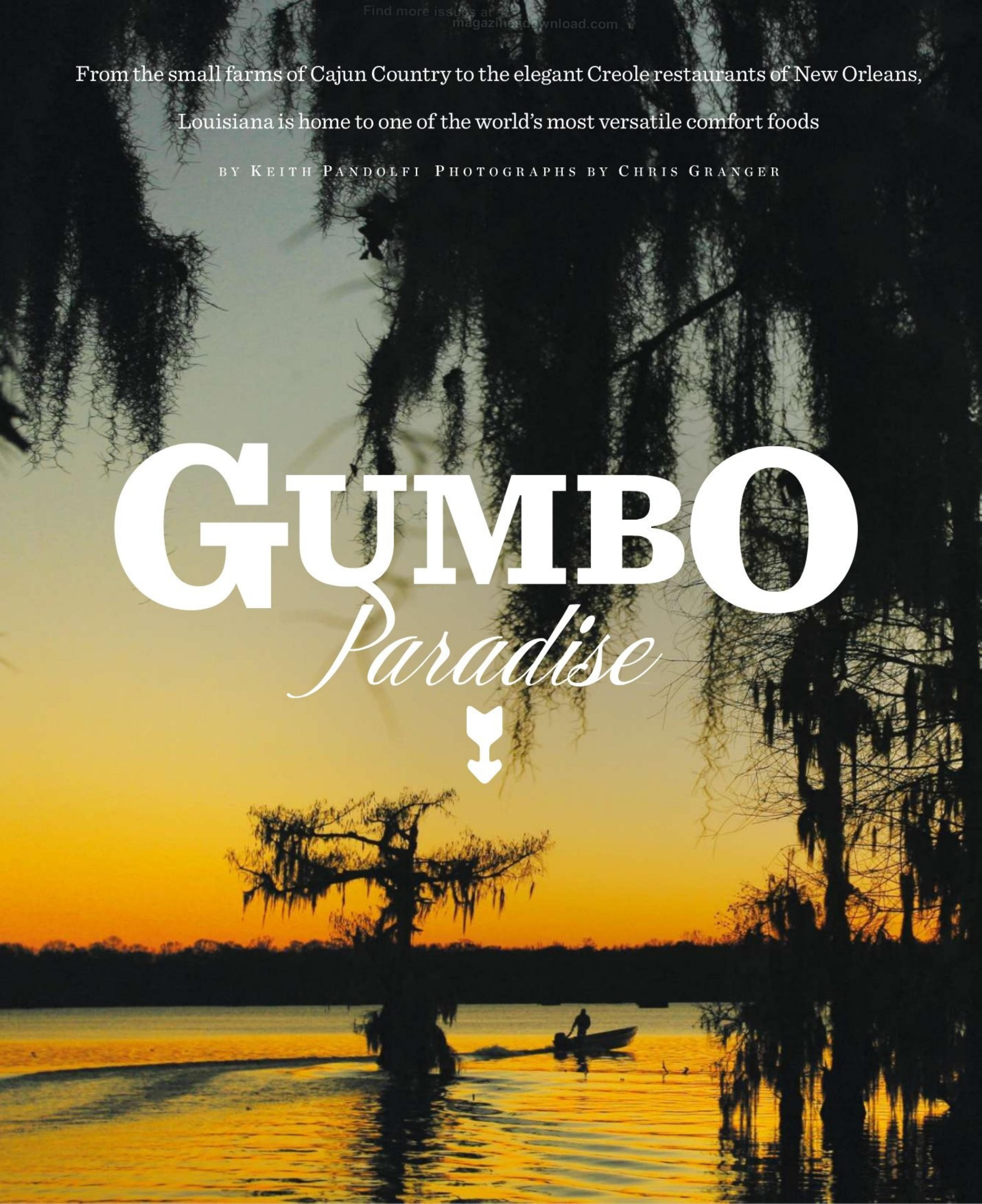
Chef Donald Link's fried chicken and andouille gumbo (see [page 61](#) for recipe). Facing page: sunset on a southern Louisiana bayou.

From the small farms of Cajun Country to the elegant Creole restaurants of New Orleans,
Louisiana is home to one of the world's most versatile comfort foods

BY KEITH PANDOLFI PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS GRANGER

GUMBO

Paradise





As the sun sets on the small Cajun town of Scott, Louisiana, Sheriff Tommy Hebert labors with his young son, Noah, in the backyard garden of a brick farmhouse. The 50-year-old lawman is shirtless, exhibiting the kind of jagged musculature only a person who works the land can attain. He and Noah are gathering okra from a modest row Hebert plants each May and harvests throughout the summer. Using a Smith & Wesson pocketknife, Hebert slices off the end of a woolly pod that seems about a foot long and hands it to me. I've never tried raw okra before; it never occurred to me to do so. But when I bite into it, I decide it's something I'd like to do damn near every day. It's got a snap that leads to a taste reminiscent of fresh-cut grass. Hebert will stew some with tomatoes for dinner; the rest he'll slice up, freeze, and, when the weather cools this autumn, thaw to make a gumbo. According to him, you can't make a good one without it.

Most people down here will tell you that okra is the origin of the word gumbo. In her book *New Orleans: A Food Biography* (AltaMira Press, 2012), historian Elizabeth M. Williams attributes the term "gumbo" to Bantu-speaking West Africans, who brought okra seeds on slave ships. Their word for okra was *ki ngombo*. Other scholars believe gumbo is a deviation of the Choctaw Indian word *kombo*, for sassafras leaves, which tribal members ground up to make an aromatic powder called filé (see "Filé Man," [page 57](#)). While either okra or filé can be used to thicken gumbo, there are strong opinions as to which is best.

Hebert's wife, Jessica, joins us as we walk beyond the garden to take a look at the marshes farther back. Hebert flooded this land with well water years ago so he could grow rice and raise crawfish. A chicken comes strutting by, and Hebert gazes at it for a second. "I can make a good gumbo out of just about anything in my yard," he tells me. "It's all right here."

During the five years I spent living in New Orleans, and the decade that has passed since, this is what I've come to love about gumbo: It is a dish in and of the state of Louisiana: its waters, its smokehouses, its rice mills, and its backyard gardens. It is everything to everybody: It is a transcendent soul food served buffet-style at Li'l Dizzy's Café in New Orleans' Treme neighborhood, or an august Creole delicacy presented by tuxedoed wait staff during Friday lunch at Galatoire's in the French

Quarter. It is something enjoyed at family celebrations where Cajun music plays from an old clock radio in the kitchen; or something you mindlessly slurp down while seated drunk on a bar stool listening to an old Irma Thomas song work its magic from the jukebox.

I may have grown up in the suburbs of Cincinnati, but for me, gumbo is a favorite comfort food and a saving grace. The year I made my first was among the most dismal of my life. After more than a dozen years of arguing with my girlfriend over whether we wanted to get married (I did; she didn't) or have kids (same), she moved out of our Brooklyn apartment. A month later, on a cold November morning, my sweet old border collie mix, Gracie, died at the end of my bed.

The kitchen fridge, once filled with farmers' market produce and butcher shop meats, was now blindingly white inside, save for the six-packs and takeout containers. The sink in which my girlfriend and I had rinsed fresh greens and bell peppers was nothing more than a receptacle to ash cigarettes into as my cat, Walker, looked on, wondering if he should move out, too.

One good thing did happen that year. My favorite football team—the once notoriously awful New Orleans Saints—was winning. A lot. And as 2009 mercifully yielded to 2010, they were well on their way to their very first Super Bowl. It was a modest miracle, yes, but one that lifted the spirits of a city and a state still yearning for signs of hope five years after the ravages of Katrina. To join them in celebration, I decided to put my troubles aside and host a Super Bowl party for which I would make my first gumbo. For guidance, I turned to a new cookbook, Donald Link's *Real Cajun* (Clarkson Potter, 2009) and his recipe for a fried chicken and andouille version.

Early that Sunday morning, I fried some chicken in vegetable oil, crisping the skin before removing it. Then I slowly added some flour to begin my roux. Following Link's instructions, I whisked it for 40 minutes, downing a couple of beers in the process. Fifteen minutes in, the roux smelled exactly like it was supposed to: nutty with overtones of burnt popcorn. I added the Louisiana trinity of chopped onion, bell pepper, and celery, as well as a spice mix that included pepper, paprika, and filé powder. Then I transferred the roux to a soup pot and added my chicken broth. A half hour later, I plopped in the fried chicken to continue cooking, and an hour after that, the sliced andouille. Then I anxiously awaited the results.

In the end, I created something extraordinary: a dark, thick, rustic stew with just the right amount of heat, redolent of spicy sausage, fried chicken, and stewed vegetables. As friends started to arrive, I proudly ladled out my day's labor. The Saints won that night. Life, it seemed, was getting better. And Link's gumbo became part of my repertoire.

During this recent trip back to Louisiana, however, I am reminded that everyone makes gumbo differently, that Link's is just one of a million variations. It's like Janice Macomber tells me in her daughter's New Orleans kitchen as she stirs what will turn out to be one of the best seafood gumbos I've ever had: "There are as many gumbos in Louisiana as there are mamas." (Everyone has her own gumbo saying, too.)

Today, Janice, who lives in the Cajun town of Abbeville and teaches at The New Orleans Cooking Experience, is making hers using the



Tommy Hebert slices okra pods from a backyard garden in the town of Scott, Louisiana. He plants okra each May and harvests it through the summer, often using it for gumbo.





This page, from top: A customer eats Creole filé gumbo at Li'l Dizzy's Café in New Orleans; Creole okra gumbo (see page 61 for recipe). Facing page, clockwise from top left: seafood gumbo (see page 62 for recipe); Li'l Dizzy's buffet; Andrea Malcombe Veron serves smoked turkey and andouille gumbo at Café Vermilionville; a Cajun chicken; crabbing on the Lower Atchafalaya River; Janice Macomber in her kitchen; chef Donald Link (left), Herbsaint restaurant's general manager Joe Briand, and the author enjoying gumbo; an Acadian barn; freshly caught Louisiana shrimp.

bounty of Louisiana's waters: blue crabs, shrimp, and some fried oysters she took home as leftovers last night from a restaurant called Shucks. Gumbo, after all, is a mishmash of whatever happens to be available, whether it's freshly caught redfish or leftover oysters, butcher shop sausage (see "Sausage School," page 58) or hunted-down fowl.

With a Beau Jocque CD playing in the background, the Cajun grandmother, her thick gray hair tamed beneath a bandana, tears the claws off the crabs before peeling her shrimp and tossing the shells of both into a stockpot filled with water. She pours some oil into a beat-up old skillet, lines up two cold Miller Lites stove-side, and starts her fragrant roux. "I just love that smell," she tells me. "I had a Cajun friend in Colorado who was dying. She asked me to come and cook a roux in her kitchen—just so she could smell Louisiana."

Written mentions of gumbo go back centuries, but no one knows when exactly it was born. Many theorize its origins might be the bouillabaisse made by early French settlers in Louisiana. And with Africans laboring in New Orleans' Creole kitchens, it's easy to see how okra made it into the mix, too. As far as roux goes, blond versions are often used as a base for French sauces and vegetable dishes. Some scholars surmise that, one fateful day, a cook might have burned his roux, then added it to the pot anyway, satisfying Louisianians' desire for more intense flavors.

Cajuns—largely French Acadians who were exiled to the bayou in the early 1700s for refusing to swear loyalty to the British crown—were forced to make their gumbos with whatever ingredients they could muster, while Creole versions, prepared in the cosmopolitan kitchens of New Orleans, with their mixture of European and African influences, were more refined.

At La Provence restaurant, in the town of Lacombe, an affable young chef named Erick Loos serves a gumbo that embodies that refinement. The recipe was the brainchild of the restaurant's late founder, Chris Kerageorgiou, who, like many of New Orleans' finest chefs, employed French Creole cooking techniques to take his Cajun mother-in-law's rustic gumbo to an entirely new level. Sitting in the Provençal-style dining room, I watch as my waiter sets down a large white bowl containing a quail roasted a deep brown and stuffed with dirty rice, and pours on a chocolate-colored purée of roux, andouille, duck, and vegetables from a silver pitcher. As I slice the quail with my fork, the dirty rice falls out, the meat breaks up into the sauce, and the entire dish becomes, well, a gumbo. (continued on page 60)





File Man



Behind a modern-day apartment complex, just outside of downtown Baton Rouge, Lionel Key (shown here) continues an age-old tradition started by Louisiana's Choctaw Indians: grinding dried sassafras leaves to make the aromatic thickening agent known as file powder. In doing so, Key uses a mortar the size of a beer barrel and a pestle that looks like a Louisville Slugger. Both were hand-carved out of native cypress by the late Joseph William Richard, Key's "Uncle Bill," in 1904—this despite the fact that old Bill was completely blind. It is said that file powder, which has a pleasantly bitter, lemony taste, was first used in gumbo back in the early 1700s, when Choctaw Indians started selling it to French colonials in New Orleans. Key gathers the sassafras leaves from a location he does not care to divulge and dries them in his living room. Watching as he grinds the desiccated leaves, I notice a cloud of yellow-green fairy dust rising into the air, and I inhale its citrusy scent. —K.P.



Sausage School ➡



Above: smoked turkey and andouille gumbo (see page 64 for recipe). Facing page, clockwise from top left: Louisiana-made deer sausage, andouille, and salami; Floyd Poche; smoking sausage at Poche's; stuffing andouille casings; Poche's smoker Kenneth Zenon.



Andouille, a coarsely ground, smoked pork link, is the sausage most commonly associated with gumbo. At Poche's Market, Restaurant and Smokehouse—opened in 1962 and located in the Cajun town of Breaux Bridge, Louisiana—second-generation owner Floyd Poche and his wife, Karen, are known to make some of the best, liberally seasoning it with salt, garlic, and red and black peppers. The Poches make other charcuterie for gumbo, too, including tasso, a lean smoked ham that's flavored with jalapeño, mustard, garlic, and spices. It lends gumbo a deep, piquant taste. For ordering information, see Pantry, [page 94](#). —K.P.



(continued from page 54) The day after my dinner at La Provence, I drive west over the swampy Atchafalaya Basin to the city of Lafayette. As my Cajun friend Mason assured me, if you want to find gumbo-serving restaurants worth traveling for, Lafayette is where you set your GPS. My first stop is Café Vermilionville, which is located inside an 1830s farmhouse that has served as a Confederate Army headquarters, and, during the city's 1980s oil boom, a singles bar. In the wood-beamed dining room, co-owner Andrea Malcombe Veron offers a smoked turkey and andouille gumbo. The turkey breast is cured right out back, yielding a dish that embodies two of my favorite flavors: dark roux and barbecued meat.

To some people, smoked turkey breast in a gumbo is heresy. While gumbo is all about melting-pot metaphors, there is disharmony in people's beliefs as to what does and does not belong in it. Cajuns feel disgust toward the Creole tendency to add a ghastly fruit known as the tomato. But I find myself in support when, weeks after my trip, I test out a Creole okra version from *The Picayune's Creole Cookbook* (Random House, 1989) that skips the roux altogether. The tomatoes give the gumbo a bright, sweet complexity.

"I use oxtail," Barbara Sias, a cook at the Rice Palace in Crowley, Louisiana, tells me, proving that the proteins in gumbo can vary wildly, too. Indulging my curiosity, she offers me her recipe for oxtail and turkey neck gumbo. Cooking it back home in New York, I find the dish deliciously dangerous in its intensity—the stiff drink of gumbos.

Just as there are many ways to make a gumbo, there are many ways to devour one. It's something I discover at Prejean's in Lafayette, where a young waitress named Kyrie hands me a complimentary demitasse of mustardy potato salad after watching me enjoy my duck and andou-

ille gumbo without it for longer than she can stand. "This is how we eat it here," she tells me. Adding potato salad to gumbo is a deranged act that pays off in spades. Doing so cools the gumbo down to room temperature and adds a creaminess—a texture sort of like melting ice cream. It's just another example of how far afield this homegrown dish can take you.

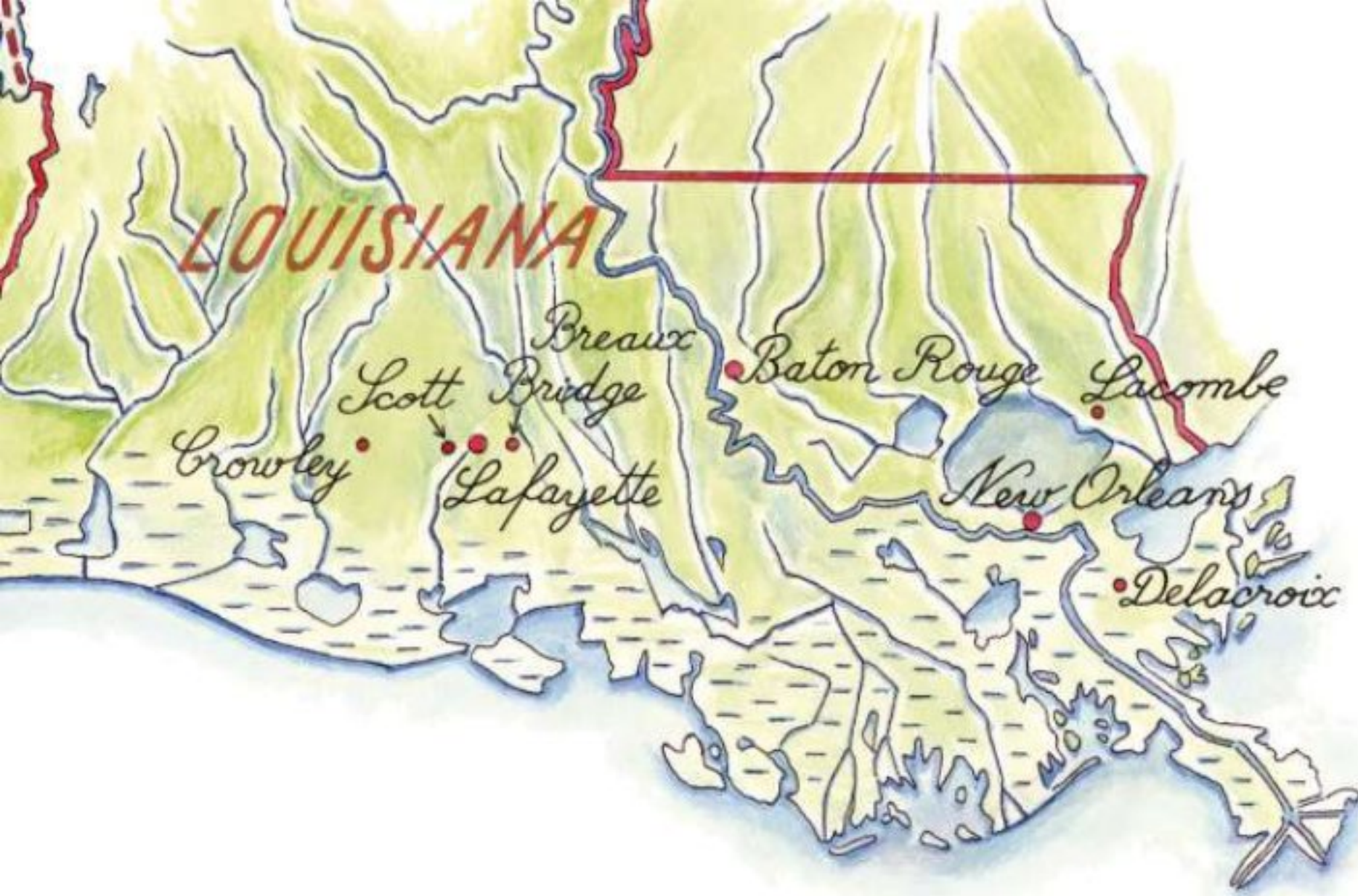
On my last day in Louisiana, I find myself in Donald Link's New Orleans kitchen. Photographer Chris Granger has scored us an invite to the chef's house so I can watch him make the same fried chicken and andouille gumbo I made for that Super Bowl party five years ago. Link owns several New Orleans restaurants, including the Cajun-inspired Cochon and the white-tablecloth Herbsaint. I've met him a few times before. He's a big guy. Quiet. And since his mind is pretty much unreadable, he has always intimidated me. Does he like me? I don't know. I like him. His gumbo practically saved my life.

When we arrive that afternoon, he is already adding flour to the sizzling chicken-skin-speckled oil to make his roux. As Link cooks, Granger and I sit at the table drinking what will turn out to be far too many glasses of wine. After a few hours, Link ladles the gumbo into bowls and sprinkles on some rice (down here, rice is a garnish for gumbo, not a base). Devouring it, I am reminded of days gone by, both good times and bad. Afterward, we all go out back for a swim. We toss a football with the chef's son, Nico. We drink more wine. All the while, Granger and I keep disappearing into the kitchen, spooning up more gumbo until the pot is empty, which is a shame since gumbo's always better the next day, or the day after that. As a pink sky gives way to blue darkness, I start feeling some remorse for ever having left this place. It's like Tommy Hebert told me back in Scott: "It's all right here."



**A lunchtime crowd
gathers at Li'l Dizzy's
Café, in New Orleans'
Treme neighborhood.**





TRAVEL GUIDE *South Louisiana*

The gumbo trail will lead you all the way from New Orleans to Lafayette and all points in between.

• WHERE TO EAT

Bread & Circus Provisions

258 Bendel Road, Lafayette (337-408-3930; bandcprovisions.com). The hen and andouille gumbo served by chef Manny Augello is among the most rustic and delicious versions you'll find in Cajun country. Enjoy it with a side of his fried chicken skins.

Café Vermillionville

1304 W Pinhook Road, Lafayette (337-237-0100; cafev.com). At this elegant, button-down restaurant, chef C.J. Panthier (pictured, right) and his team cook up excellent smoked turkey gumbo and seafood gumbo, along with a classic turtle soup.

Commander's Palace

1403 Washington Ave., New Orleans (504-899-8221; commanderspalace.com). Chef Tory McPhail offers a luxurious smoked goose and foie gras gumbo at this New Orleans institution, located in the city's Garden District.

Herbsaint

701 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans (504-524-4114; herbsaint.com). Chef de cuisine Rebecca Wilcomb serves a "gumbo of the day" that might include shrimp and crab or fried chicken and andouille at this Donald Link-owned restaurant.

Jolie's Louisiana Bistro

507 W. Pinhook Road, Lafayette (337-504-2382; jolielouisianabistro.com). A lard and flour roux is the base for chef Gregory Doucet's seasonal gumbo. Also try Doucet's Louisiana drum fish crusted with local Zapp's Crawtator potato chips.

La Provence Restaurant

25020 U.S. 190, Lacombe (985-626-7662; laprovincerestaurant.com). At John Besh's cozy restaurant on New Orleans' North Shore, chef de cuisine Erick Loos serves an elegant quail gumbo, with many ingredients sourced from a farm right out back.

Li'l Dizzy's Café

1500 Esplanade Ave., New Orleans (504-569-8997). Located in New Orleans' historic Tremé neighborhood, Dizzy's serves its Creole filé gumbo buffet-style, along with classics such as red beans and rice.

Prejean's

3480 NE Evangeline Thruway, Lafayette (337-896-3247; prejeans.com). The dining room of this Acadian Disneyworld features Spanish moss-draped cypress trees and live Cajun music. But the main draws are the smoked duck and andouille gumbo and a seafood gumbo swimming with crawfish and crab.

• WHERE TO STAY

Hilton Lafayette

1521 W. Pinhook Road, Lafayette (337-235-6111; hilton.com). The rooms are nice, the lounge is open late, and the location on West Pinhook Road makes this an ideal home base for sampling Lafayette's best gumbo restaurants.

Roosevelt Hotel

130 Roosevelt Way, New Orleans (504-648-1200; therooseveltneworleans.com). This restored historic hotel features stately rooms and the Fountain Lounge, where chef Mark Marjorie serves a smoked chicken gumbo with andouille and tasso in a lost-in-time dining room.

The Recipes

★ Creole Okra Gumbo

SERVES 6-8

We used smoky tasso ham to flavor this tomato-based gumbo (pictured on [page 54](#)), which is adapted from the recipe in *The Picayune's Creole Cookbook* (Random House, 1989).

- 4 tbsp. lard or butter
- 1 3½-4 lb. chicken, cut into 8 pieces
- Kosher salt and cayenne, to taste
- 4 oz. tasso (see "Louisiana Purchase," [page 90](#)), minced
- 2 tsp. minced thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 1 red bell pepper, minced
- 1 tbsp. minced parsley
- 6 large vine-ripe tomatoes, peeled, cored, and minced
- 6 cups chicken stock
- 1 lb. okra, trimmed and sliced ½" thick crosswise
- Cooked white rice, for serving

Melt 2 tbsp. lard or butter in an 8-qt. Dutch oven over medium-high. Season chicken with salt and cayenne; cook, turning as needed, until browned, 10-15 minutes. Add tasso; cook 5 minutes. Add thyme, bay leaf, onion, and bell pepper; cook until golden, 10-12 minutes. Add parsley and tomatoes; cook until tomatoes break down, 4-5 minutes. Add stock; boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook until chicken is cooked through and gumbo is slightly thickened, about 1 hour. Meanwhile, melt remaining lard or butter in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook okra until golden brown and slightly crisp, 8-10 minutes, then stir into gumbo; cook 15 minutes more. Serve with rice.



Fried Chicken and Andouille Gumbo

SERVES 6-8

New Orleans chef Donald Link makes his roux with the oil he uses to fry chicken, then adds the chicken to the pot for this delectable gumbo (pictured on [page 50](#)).

- ¼ cups plus 2 tbsp. canola oil
- 1 3½-4 lb. chicken, cut into 8 pieces
- 2½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 2 cups flour
- 1½ tsp. dark chile powder
- 1½ tsp. filé powder (see "Louisiana Purchase," [page 90](#))
- 1 tsp. cayenne
- 1 tsp. ground white pepper
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 stalks celery, minced
- 1 green bell pepper, minced
- 1 jalapeño, minced
- 1 poblano pepper, minced
- 1 yellow onion, minced
- 12 cups chicken stock
- 1 lb. andouille (see "Louisiana Purchase," [page 90](#)), halved and sliced
- 12 oz. okra, trimmed and sliced ½" thick
- Sliced scallions, for garnish
- Cooked white rice, for serving



From left: Stuffed quail gumbo; smoked goose and foie gras gumbo; oxtail gumbo.

1 Heat $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups oil in an 8-qt. Dutch oven until a deep-fry thermometer reads 350° . Season chicken with 1 tsp. black pepper and salt; toss with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour. Working in batches, fry chicken until golden; transfer to paper towels to drain.

2 Add remaining flour to skillet; whisk until smooth. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, whisking, until color of roux is dark chocolate, 1– $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Add remaining black pepper, the chile and filé powders, cayenne, white pepper, paprika, garlic, celery, bell pepper, jalapeño, poblano, and onion; cook until soft, 10–12 minutes. Add stock; boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring occasionally and skimming fat as needed, until slightly thickened, about 30 minutes. Add reserved chicken; cook until chicken is cooked through, about 45 minutes. Add andouille; cook until chicken is falling off the bone, about 1 hour.

3 Using tongs, transfer chicken to a cutting board and let cool slightly; shred, discarding skin and bones, and return to pot. Heat remaining oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook okra until golden brown and slightly crisp, 8–10 minutes, then stir into gumbo; cook 15 minutes. Garnish with scallions; serve with rice.

Oxtail Gumbo

SERVES 6–8

To make the roux for this meaty gumbo (pictured above), Barbara Sias, a cook at Rice Palace in Crowley, Louisiana, blends rendered oxtail fat with oil.

- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup canola oil
- 4 lb. beef oxtails, trimmed
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 lb. pork sausage
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup flour
- 2 tbsp. Creole seasoning, (see "Louisiana Purchase," page 90)
- 1 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 6 scallions, minced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 stalks celery, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 1 smoked turkey neck, cut into 2" pieces
- 8 cups chicken stock
- Cooked white rice, for serving

Heat $1\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp. oil in an 8-qt. Dutch oven over medium-high. Season oxtails with salt and pepper; cook until browned, and fat is rendered, about 20 minutes, and transfer to a plate. Cook sausage until browned, 5–7 minutes; transfer to a plate. Add remaining oil and sprinkle in flour; make a dark roux (see recipe on page 64). Add Creole seasoning, chile flakes, scallions,

garlic, celery, and onion; cook until soft, 10–12 minutes. Add reserved meats, the turkey neck, stock, and salt; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, covered, and skimming fat as needed, until oxtails are tender, about 3 hours. Uncover; cook until thickened, 35–40 minutes. Serve with rice.

Seafood Gumbo

SERVES 6–8

The recipe for this shrimp and crab gumbo (pictured on page 55) was provided by Abbeville home cook Janice Macomber.

- 6 live blue crabs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canola oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 stalks celery, chopped
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ large yellow onions, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 8 cups seafood stock
- 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. cayenne
- 2 bay leaves
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 lb. medium shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails off
- 1 lb. jumbo lump crabmeat
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup minced parsley
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh lemon juice
- 5 scallions, chopped
- Cooked white rice, for serving

1 Clean the crabs: Working with one crab at a time, discard legs; remove and reserve claws. Discard the triangular apron on the underside of the crab, pull body away from top shell, and discard the shell. Remove gills and organs; rinse body under running water. Transfer crabs to a bowl; chill until ready to use.

2 Heat oil in an 8-qt. Dutch oven over high and sprinkle in flour; make a dark roux (see recipe on page 64). Add garlic, celery, onions, and bell pepper; cook until soft, 10–12 minutes. Add reserved crabs, the stock, Worcestershire sauce, cayenne, bay leaves, salt, and pepper; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened, 25–30 minutes. Add shrimp and crabmeat; cook until shrimp are pink, 3–5 minutes. Stir in parsley, lemon juice, and scallions. Serve with rice.

Smoked Goose and Foie Gras Gumbo

SERVES 6–8

Commander's Palace chef Tory McPhail ladles up this sophisticated smoked goose and foie gras gumbo (pictured above).

- 1 cup rendered goose fat
- 1 cup flour
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 stalks celery, minced
- 1 green bell pepper, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 1 lb. white button mushrooms, minced
- 2 tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 tsp. Creole seasoning (see "Louisiana Purchase," page 90)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 2 bay leaves
- 10 cups chicken stock
- 12 oz. smoked goose (see "Louisiana Purchase," page 90), roughly chopped
- 1 lb. chanterelle, porcini, or

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Dark Roux

Making a good roux requires a strong arm and the patience of a New Orleans Saint. But the results are well worth it. When preparing one, be sure to give yourself some time (it can take nearly an hour), and, as many a Louisiana chef will recommend, line a couple of beers along the stovetop to help pass the minutes.

EQUAL PARTS:

canola oil, lard, or rendered fat

all-purpose flour

Heat oil, lard, or fat in an 8-qt. Dutch oven over high. While whisking, sprinkle in flour until smooth, 1–2 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, whisking continually and slowly (to avoid hot splatters), and scraping the edges and sides of pan until roux turns the color of dark chocolate, 40–50 minutes for 1 cup of roux.

andouille to a cutting board; mince and set aside. Discard bay leaf, and working in batches, purée gumbo in a blender until smooth. Keep gumbo warm.

2 Make the quail stuffing: Melt bacon fat in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook rice, garlic, scallion, bell pepper, and onion until soft, 5–7 minutes. Stir in reserved minced andouille, 1 cup gumbo, the bread crumbs, salt, and pepper; let cool.

3 Stuff the quail and bake: Heat oven to 475°. Season quail with salt and pepper. Spoon stuffing into the cavity of each quail; transfer to a 9"x13" baking dish and sprinkle with paprika. Cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the thigh reads 165°, about 25 minutes. Divide quail between 8 bowls and top with gumbo; garnish with minced egg and chives.

oyster mushrooms, cut into 1" pieces
1 tsp. hot sauce
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
½ tsp. minced thyme
3 oz. foie gras, puréed
Sliced scallions, for garnish
Cooked white rice, for serving

Melt goose fat in an 8-qt. Dutch oven over high. Sprinkle in flour; whisk until smooth. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, whisking constantly, until roux is the color of peanut butter, 25–30 minutes. Add garlic, celery, bell pepper, and onion; cook until soft, 10–12 minutes. Add button mushrooms, salt, Creole seasoning, black pepper, and bay leaves; cook 2 minutes. Whisk in stock; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, skimming fat as needed, until thickened, about 1 hour. Add smoked goose, chanterelles, hot and Worcestershire sauces, thyme, and salt; cook until goose is warmed through and mushrooms are tender, 12–15 minutes. Ladle into bowls; garnish with puréed foie gras and scallions. Serve with rice.

Smoked Turkey and Andouille Gumbo

SERVES 6–8

At Café Vermilionville, a stock of mirepoix and smoked turkey wings enriches this dark, piquant gumbo (pictured on [page 58](#)).

For the stock:

- 3 lb. smoked turkey wings (see "Louisiana Purchase," [page 90](#))
- 6 scallions, roughly chopped
- 4 sprigs parsley
- 4 stalks celery, chopped
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 1 large white onion, chopped

For the gumbo:

- ¾ cup canola oil
- 1½ lb. andouille (see "Louisiana Purchase,"

[page 90](#)), roughly chopped

- 1 cup flour
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small red onion, minced
- 1 small white onion, minced
- 1 green bell pepper, minced
- 1 red bell pepper, minced
- 1 tbsp. granulated garlic
- 1 tbsp. granulated onion
- 2 tsp. mesquite seasoning, (see [page 94](#))
- 1 tsp. cayenne
- 1 tsp. ground white pepper
- ½ tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 1½ lb. smoked turkey breast, cut into ¾" pieces
- 3 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Cooked white rice, for serving

1 Make the stock: Bring ingredients and 1 gallon water to a boil in a large stockpot. Reduce heat to medium; simmer 4 hours, then strain stock and keep warm.

2 Make the gumbo: Heat 2 tbsp. oil in an 8-qt. Dutch oven over medium-high. Cook andouille until fat renders, 8–10 minutes; transfer to a plate. Add remaining oil and sprinkle in flour; make a dark roux (see recipe at right). Add garlic, onions, and bell peppers; cook until soft, 10–12 minutes. Stir in granulated garlic and onion, mesquite seasoning, cayenne, white pepper, and chile flakes; cook 1 minute. Add reserved stock and andouille, the turkey breast, Worcestershire sauce, and salt; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, stirring occasionally, until gumbo is thickened, about 1 hour. Serve with rice.

Stuffed Quail Gumbo

SERVES 8

Dirty rice–stuffed quail (pictured on [page 62](#)) is served with puréed gumbo at La Provence restaurant in Lacombe, Louisiana.

For the gumbo:

- ¾ cup canola oil
- ¾ cup flour
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 green bell pepper, minced
- 1 large white onion, minced
- 1 stalk celery, minced
- ⅓ cup tomato paste
- 8 cups chicken stock
- ½ lb. andouille (see "Louisiana Purchase," [page 90](#)), sliced crosswise 2" thick
- 2 oz. okra, trimmed and sliced ½" thick
- ¼ cup Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the quail:

- 1 tbsp. rendered bacon fat or canola oil
- 1½ cups cooked long-grain white rice, cooled
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 scallion, thinly sliced
- ½ red bell pepper, minced
- ½ small white onion, minced
- ½ cup bread crumbs
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 8 quail, back and breast bones discarded
- 1 tbsp. paprika
- Minced hard-boiled egg and chives, for garnish

1 Make the gumbo: Heat oil in an 8-qt. Dutch oven over high and sprinkle in flour; make a dark roux (see recipe, above right). Cook garlic, bell pepper, onion, and celery until soft, 5–7 minutes. Stir in tomato paste; cook 3 minutes. Add stock; boil. Reduce heat to medium; add andouille, okra, Worcestershire sauce, oregano, thyme, bay leaf, salt, and pepper, and cook, stirring occasionally, until gumbo is reduced by a third, 1½–2 hours. Transfer half the

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*The fruits of the
olive harvest at the
author's ancestral
home in the village of
Ain el Deib, Lebanon.*



In the early 1900s, my paternal grandfather, Maroun Kassab, planted close to 200 olive saplings in the southern Lebanese village of Ain el Delb, just east of the biblical city of Sidon. His home sat among the young trees, and every day he would wake up before dawn and carry buckets of water from his well, tending to them one by one. This backbreaking work lasted years before the roots were strong enough to sustain the plants. From then on, the trees depended on Baal, the ancient deity of fertility, rain, and dew once worshipped by the region's indigenous inhabitants, the Canaanites. But although the trees were watered by the heavens, Jiddi, or Grandfather, still pampered them, trimming off the dead wood, pulling out weeds, and nurturing the soil.

Jiddi taught my father, his eldest son, how to care for the trees as lovingly as if they were family. During the October harvests, the two picked olives together. They referred to the groves as the *rizzi*, a Lebanese word that roughly translates as "blessing." Jiddi passed away before



HOME FOR THE HARVEST

Lebanon A NATIVE SON RETURNS TO
AND HIS FAMILY'S OLIVE GROVE FOR
A BITTERSWEET FEAST

BY FOUAD KASSAB ✱ PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES OSELAND



I was born, but the trees were handed down to my father and his siblings. The brilliant oil from their fruit was our inheritance, coursing through almost every meal.

I WAS FIVE YEARS OLD when war came to our village, upending our lives. We left the conflict and moved to Byblos, a coastal city north of Beirut. Our family of six exchanged trees and white soil for the safety of a two-bedroom apartment in a concrete building block. I grew up with fragmented memories of my heritage, pieced together from histories yearningly recounted by my parents.

Each birthday, my secret wish was the return to our rightful lives. For years, I would determinedly blow on every dandelion I encountered, hoping that one of the thousands of seeds I scattered would carry my wish back home.

A decade later, in 1994, we returned, but to a bombed-out house and a grove overgrown with thorn bushes. Before we began repairing our damaged home, my father took up Jiddi's work again. He cut through underbrush; he spoke to the trees. The earth, it seemed, recognized his sweat. In just one year, the trees became

rejuvenated, their regrowth robust, and come October, branches were weighed down by an abundance of fruit so heavy the leaves brushed the ground.

That year was the first olive harvest I'd ever worked. My father, my two brothers, and I (continued on page 73)

FOUAD KASSAB is the chef-owner of Chic Pea restaurant in Sydney, Australia. His last article for *SAVEUR* was "Breakfast at Honaineh" (January/February 2014).



Top row, from left: The author picks table grapes at his parents' home; the author's sister, Mary, holds a bottle of unfiltered olive oil; the hills surrounding the olive grove; just-picked pomegranates.





Center row: lamb-stuffed eggplant and zucchini; harvesting olives; olives are pressed; the author's mother, Isabelle, stuffs eggplants. Bottom row: cured olives; making pistachio-filled cookies at a bakery in Sidon; preparing tabbouleh. Recipes start on [page 76](#).

*This page: Lebanese tabbouleh, finely chopped fresh parsley and mint bathed in olive oil and lemon juice (see [page 78](#) for recipe).
Facing page: kefta bil sayniyeh, spiced lamb patties with tomato and onion (see [page 76](#) for recipe).*







The author's sister, Mary (standing, far left), mother, Isabelle, (seated, in blue shirt, bottom left), and other family and friends share a harvest lunch of raw lamb kibbeh, tabbouleh, hummus, and more at the Kassab family home in Ain el Delb, Lebanon.



My father
folded the just-
baked sheets,
dipping the shards
into fresh olive
oil and handing
them to me. We
ate together in
silent bliss

✱ ✱ ✱

(continued from [page 68](#)) picked alongside a group of Palestinian men and women who had been living in a refugee camp near our land. A 15-year-old who had never done manual labor before, I was complaining of dehydration within an hour of arriving. I laugh now at how spoiled I must have seemed to our workers, my soft hands almost exfoliated by their sand-papery palms after a handshake.

We woke early in the morning and set up large rugs and plastic sheets under the trees. Our work was slower than that of our neighbors; we picked each olive by hand while they would use bamboo sticks to strike the branches. This practice was banned in our grove. My father would repeat Jiddi's words: "Would you hit someone who feeds you?"

As the days went by, I began to toughen and complain less. Harvest became a peaceful experience, one I looked forward to every year. I especially loved sifting through thousands of green olives to find the plumpest and prettiest ones to give to my mother to brine for the year's supply. The rest would be taken to a nearby village to be pressed into oil. It became a ritual for my siblings and me to go to the press with our father on the first day of the harvest. Our fruit would be washed and crushed, then out would gush the olive oil in a cloudy brilliance of golden green, opaque and unfiltered.

As I grew older, in search of opportunity, I went abroad. At 20, I left Lebanon for Sydney, Australia, with my brother Fady. My older brother, Maroun, departed, too, for the United States. My memory of the harvest before we dispersed is most vivid. My father and I took the olives from the first day of picking to press them. Right beside the oil spout of the press sat an old woman baking paper-thin bread on a searingly hot metal grill. My father folded the crackling just-baked sheets, dipping the hot shards into the olive oil and handing them to me. We ate together in silent bliss.

The next October, and the many that followed, I



would call my parents from Australia, wanting to hear every little detail: “Which part of the rizzi’ is being harvested first? Is the fruit nice and plump?” I craved being there. I missed my home, and I missed the trees. When other people I knew tasted olive oil, they savored only the flavor, but my entire being would be transported. I would smell the stone my mother used to crush the olives for brining, and I would see her face; I would recall my father’s suntanned skin and his car filled with hessian bags bursting with olives. I would remember my sister’s smile as the two of us ate a breakfast of labneh, thick strained yogurt, drowned in olive oil. Finally, I could stand it no longer. I had to be there.

“WHAT SHALL I COOK FOR YOU?” That was my mother’s first question when I told her she should expect me there for my first harvest in 13 years. When words fail, my mother cooks.

“Anything with olive oil, Immi!” I replied.

“I’ll make you some kibbeh. And tabbouleh, too. The romano beans will still be around when you come, so we can make loubieh bil zeit. Of course there’ll be stuffed grape leaves and—”

“Immi,” I stopped her. “You’re going to need more than that.” Behind her back, I had planned a reunion with my siblings. We were all heading home.

I was the first to arrive in Lebanon. I landed at night, and my father drove me home. To our left the hills shimmered with electric lights from Beirut’s ever-expanding urban sprawl, and to our right the Mediterranean Sea ebbed and flowed under a moonlit sky dotted with familiar stars.

My mother stood waiting at the door with tears in her eyes. We hugged and laughed as we sat down for a late dinner. *Man’oushé*, a flaky flatbread, was earthy with toasted sesame seeds and *za’atar* and brightened by wedges of ripe tomato flooded with the new-season oil. We shared sumac-dusted eggs pan-fried with olive oil and quick-cured olives my mom had prepared a few days before.

The next morning I woke early. My father was already up, brewing a pot of Lebanese coffee. We drove down to the olive trees. The cool sea air filtered through a large neighboring orange grove between the hillsides.

Within half an hour, the workers began arriving. This fall, they were Syrian refugees. They had fled their war-torn country by the thousands. Those helping us with the harvest were living in an unfinished building close to our home. They worked carefully, picking the fruit as they exchanged stories from the tops of the trees. Their situation was similar to the one that my family had endured almost two decades earlier, but to me, now, their plight seemed worse and their future more uncertain.

Over the next few days both of my brothers, Fady and Maroun, arrived, along with Fady’s German wife and children. My sister, Mary, came from Beirut with her clan.



An influx of aunts, uncles, and cousins from all over the country turned up for a big feast. Their children came, too, some whom I remembered and others who were born while I was away. Each family unloaded *ma’amoul*, shortbread cookies stuffed with dates or pistachios, when they arrived. As lunch drew near, the long table filled up with more dishes than I could count. We helped ourselves to stuffed grape leaves, slow-cooked with lamb on the bone. There were kibbeh, lamb and bulgur wheat croquettes, and *kefta bil sayniyeh*, rich, spiced patties of lamb baked with tomatoes. There were Mom’s stuffed eggplants. And we filled out our plates with tabbouleh and baba ghannouj. We ate, toasting my parents and each other.

The meal extended well into the afternoon, and more food came out. I plucked up *shish barak*, little dumplings simmered in yogurt and bursting with juicy beef, and *fattet hummus*, tender, nutty chickpeas with fried pine nuts in aioli. Only at my mother and father’s house have I seen such abundance. We ate and drank and reminisced loudly. The house overflowed with laughter. But when I examined my parents closely, I could see a familiar look in their eyes. It was the same expression I had seen on all of my previous visits—of happiness burdened by the awareness that this joyful moment would be short-lived.

To my father and mother, their family was a sight as perfect as a fully formed dandelion seed pod. They knew, however, that the wind would eventually blow, and that the seeds would soon scatter again, to strange places as far-flung as Sydney and New Jersey. But their hope, I knew, was that the winds might turn and the seeds come to land in a fertile olive grove right down the road. 🌿

Man’oushé,
flaky flatbreads,
were topped
with sesame
seeds, za’atar
and ripe tomato,
and flooded
with new-
season olive oil



Above: Syrian olive pickers enjoy a picnic breakfast in the olive grove. Facing page: flatbread with za’atar (see [page 78](#) for recipe).

★ Baba Ghannouj

(Mashed Eggplant Dip)

MAKES 3 CUPS

Charring the skin of the eggplant for this Levantine dip (pictured below at top left) imbues the pulp with a smoky flavor.

- 2 lb. eggplants, halved lengthwise
- 1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
- 3 tbsp. tahini
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup plain, full-fat yogurt
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup pomegranate seeds
- Mint leaves, for garnish

Heat oven broiler. Place eggplant cut side down on a baking sheet; prick all over with a knife. Broil, flipping once, until skin is charred and eggplant is tender, 20–25 minutes. Transfer eggplant to a colander set over a bowl; cover with plastic wrap. Let cool; peel. Place lemon juice, tahini, and garlic in a food processor; let sit 10 minutes. Add reserved eggplant, the yogurt, salt, and pepper; pulse until slightly smooth and transfer to a shallow dish. Using a spoon, make a well on the surface; drizzle with oil. Garnish with pomegranate seeds and mint.

Batenjen Mehchi

(Lebanese Lamb-Stuffed Eggplant)

SERVES 6

Petite eggplants are stuffed with a mixture of spiced lamb and rice for this rustic dish (pictured on page 68). Zucchini may be substituted for the eggplant.

- 1/2 lb. ground lamb
- 3 tbsp. long grain white rice
- 3 tbsp. tomato paste
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small white onion, minced
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground allspice
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 24 Japanese or fairy tale eggplants (see page 94)

- 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp. dried mint
- 1 16-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand

1 Mix lamb, rice, half each the tomato paste, garlic, onion, and cinnamon, the allspice, salt, pepper, and 3/4 cup water in a bowl; let sit 30 minutes. Using a paring knife, stem and hollow out eggplants, keeping them whole. Mince flesh and mix with lamb mixture; stuff eggplants.



Clockwise from top left: baba ghannouj (see recipe at left); chickpeas with pita and spiced yogurt (see recipe above); Lebanese date shortbread; braised romano beans (see recipes on page 78).

2 Heat oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high. Cook remaining garlic and onion until golden, 4–6 minutes. Stir in remaining tomato paste, cinnamon, salt, and pepper; cook 3 minutes. Add mint, tomatoes, and 1 cup water; boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and add stuffed eggplants; cook, covered, until eggplants are tender and the filling is cooked through, 30–35 minutes.

Fattet Hummus

(Chickpeas with Pita and Spiced Yogurt)

SERVES 4

Brown butter tops this dish of baked pita and chickpeas tossed with spiced yogurt (pictured below).

- 1 1/2 cups dried chickpeas, soaked overnight with 1 tsp. baking powder, then drained, or two 16-oz. cans chickpeas, drained

1 If using dried chickpeas, boil them in water in an 8-qt. saucepan until very tender, about 30 minutes. Drain; transfer to a shallow dish.

2 Heat oven to 400°. Toss pita with 1/3 cup oil, salt, and pepper on a baking sheet; spread into an even layer. Bake until golden and crisp, 8–10 minutes; let cool slightly and toss with chickpeas. Heat remaining oil in an 8" skillet over medium-high. Cook pine nuts until golden, 4–5 minutes; set aside. Stir yogurt, mint, paprika, garlic, salt, and pepper in a bowl; drizzle over pita mixture. Top with pine nuts; drizzle with brown butter.

Kefta bil Sayniyeh

(Spiced Lamb Patties with Tomato and Onion)

SERVES 6–8

Lebanese seven-spice powder—a mix of allspice, black pepper, cinnamon, cloves, fenugreek, ginger, and nutmeg—flavors the lamb patties as well as the tomatoes for this dish (pictured on page 71).

- 2 lb. ground lamb
- 1/2 cup minced parsley
- 1/3 cup flour
- 2 tsp. dried mint
- 2 tsp. Lebanese seven-spice powder (see page 94)
- 6 cloves garlic (2 minced, 4 thinly sliced)
- 1 1/2 large white onions (1/2 grated, 1 sliced 1/2" thick)
- 1 egg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. tomato paste
- 2 canned whole, peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 2 vine-ripe tomatoes, cored and sliced 1/4" thick

1 Mix lamb, parsley, flour, mint, 1 tsp. spice powder, the minced garlic, grated onion, egg, salt, and pepper in a bowl. Divide into twenty-seven 1 1/2-oz. balls; form into 2" logs. Heat 3 tbsp. oil in an ovenproof 12" skillet over medium-high. Cook logs, turn-



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ing as needed, until browned, 4–6 minutes; transfer to a plate.

2 Heat oven to 400°. Add remaining oil to skillet; cook sliced garlic and onion until golden, 4–6 minutes. Add remaining seven-spice powder and the tomato paste; cook 2 minutes. Add crushed tomatoes, cinnamon, salt, and pepper; cook until slightly thickened, 3–4 minutes. Stir in reserved lamb logs; top with sliced tomatoes. Bake until tomatoes are slightly dry, 30–35 minutes.

Loubieh bil Zeit

(Romano Beans with Tomatoes)

SERVES 4

Romano beans are braised with tomatoes in olive oil for this simple side dish (pictured on [page 76](#)). Green beans or fava beans may also be used.

- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/2 small white onion, minced
- 1 tsp. tomato paste
- 1 vine-ripe tomato, cored and roughly chopped
- 1 lb. small romano or green beans, trimmed and halved
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp. thinly sliced parsley

Heat oil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high. Cook garlic and onion until soft, 4–6 minutes. Add tomato paste; cook 2 minutes. Add tomato and 1/2 cup water; cook until tomato is broken down, 6–8 minutes. Add beans, salt, pepper, and 3/4 cup water and reduce heat to medium; cook, covered, until beans are very tender, 20–25 minutes. Garnish with parsley.

Ma'amoul bil Tamer

(Lebanese Date Shortbread)

MAKES 25

These Lebanese shortbreads (pictured on [page 76](#)) feature a buttery pastry wrapped around a spiced date filling. Use a traditional *ma'amoul* mold (see *The Pantry*, [page 94](#)) to shape them, if you like.

For the crust:

- 3 cups fine semolina
- 1/2 cup flour
- 12 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 3 tbsp. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/3 cup whole milk
- 2 1/2 tbsp. rose water (see [page 94](#))
- 2 tsp. orange blossom water (see [page 94](#))

For the filling:

- 5 cups pitted dates
- 10 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
- 2 tbsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 1/2 tbsp. grated nutmeg

1 Make the crust: Pulse semolina, flour, butter, sugar, and salt in a food processor into pea-size crumbles. Add milk and rose and orange blossom waters; pulse until dough forms. Flatten dough into a disk and wrap in plastic wrap; chill 2 hours.

2 Make the filling: Purée dates, butter, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a food processor until smooth. Divide into 25 balls; chill 30 minutes.

3 Heat oven to 400°. Divide dough into 25 balls. Working with 1 ball at a time, press finger into dough, creating a pocket. Place 1 ball of filling into pocket; pinch sides to encase filling and roll into a ball. Press balls into *ma'amoul* mold, or flatten slightly using your palm; transfer to a baking sheet. Bake until golden, 20–25 minutes; let cool before serving.

★ Man'oushé bil Za'atar

(Flatbread with Za'atar)

SERVES 1

Za'atar, a Middle Eastern spice mix of wild thyme, sumac, and toasted sesame seeds, tops chewy flatbread in this Lebanese snack (pictured on [page 74](#)).

- 1 cup flour, plus more for dusting
- 6 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil



Green Gold

Lebanon, home to some of the world's oldest olive trees, has been producing olive oil since the Bronze Age, or 3500 BC. Mild winters and temperate summers yield outstanding oils, some of which are available in the U.S. From left: Founded in 2012 by a restaurateur whose grandfather farmed olives in Lebanon, **Oliver's Table Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (\$29 for a 17-oz. bottle) is wonderfully spicy, with a lingering, pungent, peppery finish. **Litani Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (\$25 for a 29-oz. jug), pressed from olives from 600-year-old trees, has a subtly fruity flavor. **Zejd Premium Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (\$22 for a 17-oz. bottle) has grassy, nutty notes that shine in tabbouleh, while **Eliunt Ahrum Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (\$45 for three 2-oz. bottles), an unfiltered oil from the Zgharta area in northern Lebanon, is intensely fragrant, with an aroma that hints at banana. —Emily Carter

- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 tbsp. za'atar (see [page 94](#))
- 2 tbsp. cured black olives, pitted
- 1/2 vine-ripe tomato, cut into 1/4" wedges
- Mint leaves, for garnish

Stir flour, 1 tbsp. oil, the salt, and 1/4 cup water in a bowl until dough forms. Knead dough in bowl until elastic, 1–2 minutes; cover with plastic wrap and let sit in a warm place for 10 minutes. Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface; roll into a 10" circle, about 1/8" thick. Stir 2 tbsp. oil and the *za'atar* in a bowl. Heat remaining oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high; cook dough, flipping once, until golden and slightly puffed, 5–7 minutes. Slide onto a plate and spread with *za'atar* mixture; top with olives, tomato, and mint leaves.

★ Tabbouleh

SERVES 8

Roughly chopped parsley and mint are bathed in fruity extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice in this Middle Eastern appetizer (pictured on [page 70](#)).

- 3 cups packed parsley leaves, roughly chopped
- 1 1/2 cups packed mint leaves, roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. pomegranate molasses (see [page 94](#))
- 1/2 tsp. ground allspice
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 4 vine-ripe tomatoes, minced
- 1 medium red onion, minced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Stir ingredients in a bowl; let sit 10 minutes before serving.



10

CHEFS 10 WINERIES



a world of difference

We asked 10 of America's top chefs to develop recipes paired specifically to 10 of Portugal's best wines. The result: a delectable and diverse group of dishes from a variety of cuisines including French, Italian, Vietnamese, contemporary Portuguese, Asian fusion and seafood paired perfectly to a unique collection of wines.

On the 1st of every month throughout this year, we're releasing one of the recipes with the wine pairing through the Wines of Portugal Facebook page, Twitter handle (hashtag #10chefs) and on the website. Videos of each chef preparing their respective recipes and talking about the unique wine pairing are also available online.

The culmination of this culinary journey will be a recipe book featuring the 10 chefs, wines, wineries and recipes. Look for this limited edition book at upcoming Wines of Portugal events. Follow us on Facebook for a chance to win your own copy.

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A World of Classics

For 20 years we've traveled the world, collecting recipes for the most iconic dishes. The result? **SAVEUR'S** *The New Classics Cookbook*. Here's a taste.

Shaker Lemon Pie

SERVES 8

For the filling:

- 2 cups sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. kosher salt
- 2 large lemons, zested and thinly sliced, seeds discarded
- 4 eggs
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 3 tbsp. flour

For the crust:

- $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups flour, plus more
- 10 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
- 2 tbsp. vegetable shortening
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 5 tbsp. ice-cold water

1 Start the filling: Toss sugar, salt, and lemon zest and slices in a bowl; cover with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for 24 hours.

2 Make the crust: Pulse flour, butter, shortening, and salt in a food processor into pea-size crumbs. Add water;

pulse until dough forms. Divide dough in half and flatten into disks; wrap in plastic wrap and chill 1 hour.

3 Finish the filling and bake the pie: Heat oven to 425°. Whisk eggs in a bowl until frothy. Whisk in melted butter and 3 tbsp. flour; stir into reserved lemon mixture. On a lightly floured surface, roll 1 disk dough into a 12" round; fit into a 9" pie plate. Trim edges using a knife, leaving 1" dough overhanging edge of plate; pour in filling. Roll remaining disk dough into a 12" round and place over top of pie. Pinch top and bottom edges together and fold under; crimp edges and cut 5 steam vents in the top crust. Bake until crust is golden, about 30 minutes. Reduce oven to 350°; bake until golden brown, 25–30 minutes. Let cool completely before serving.





Shakers, descendents of an 18th-century Christian ascetic movement, believe that when you eat, you should “shaker your plate”—finish every last crumb. That’s easy to do when you’re having a slice of this sweet-tart, sunny pie with its buttery crust and marmalade-like citrus filling.



SERVES 4

- 5 slices thick-cut bacon, cut into ½"-thick strips
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 small shallot, minced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 8 oz. frisée, torn into bite-size pieces
- 1 tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 4 eggs

1 Boil bacon and 1 cup water in a 12" skillet. Reduce heat to medium-high; cook until water is evaporated and bacon is crisp, 35-40 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer bacon to paper towels to drain. Transfer 3 tbsp. bacon fat to a large bowl. Add lemon juice, mustard, shallot, salt, and pepper. While whisking, slowly drizzle in oil until vinaigrette is emulsified. Add reserved bacon and the frisée; toss and divide between 4 plates.

2 Boil a 4-quart saucepan of water; add vinegar, reduce heat to medium, and, using a slotted spoon, swirl water. Crack eggs, one at a time, into a ramekin, and slide into water; cook until whites are set, about 2 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, divide eggs between plates; garnish with more black pepper.

Salade Lyonnaise

Hailing from Lyon, this French bistro standard gathers a delectable trio of bitter frisée, runny poached egg, and crisp lardons. The salad gets an extra hit of pork flavor from emulsifying the vinaigrette with bacon fat; breaking the yolks into the greens adds even more richness.

Veal Parmesan

Tender veal, fried in crisp bread crumbs, is lavished with tomato sauce and melted cheese in this Italian-American favorite.

SERVES 4

For the sauce:

- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ small onion, minced
- 1 tbsp. minced parsley
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ¼ tsp. dried thyme
- 1 28-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed by hand
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the veal:

- ½ cup flour
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 ½ cups bread crumbs
- 8 2-oz. veal cutlets, pounded ⅛" thick
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ½ cup olive oil
- 8 slices provolone cheese
- ¾ cup grated parmesan
- 2 tbsp. roughly chopped parsley

1 Make the sauce: Heat oil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium. Cook bay leaf, garlic, and onion until soft, 8–10 minutes. Add remaining ingredients; cook until thickened, about 20 minutes.

2 Make the veal: Heat oven broiler. Place flour, eggs, and bread crumbs in separate shallow dishes. Season veal with salt and pepper. Working with 1 piece at a time, dredge veal in flour, then dip in eggs; coat in bread crumbs and transfer to a plate. Heat 2 tbsp. oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high. Working in batches, and adding remaining oil as needed, cook veal, flipping once, until golden, 3–4 minutes. Transfer to a baking sheet in a single layer. Spoon ⅓ cup reserved sauce over each cutlet; top with 1 slice provolone and sprinkle with 1½ tbsp. parmesan. Broil until cheese is golden and bubbly, 4–5 minutes. Garnish with parsley.



Irish Stew

Earthy lamb shoulder is rendered spoon-tender by a simmer and then a long, slow bake with plenty of filling potatoes and aromatic carrots and onions in this traditional warming stew from the Emerald Isle. For bright color and a bit more verdant sweetness, green peas are tossed in toward the end of the cooking.

SERVES 6-8

- 3 lb. boneless lamb stew meat (preferably from the neck and shoulder), cut into 1" pieces
- 2 lb. russet potatoes, peeled and cut crosswise into thirds
- 2 tbsp. roughly chopped parsley
- 7 carrots, halved crosswise
- 2 medium yellow onions, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 ½ cups fresh or frozen peas

Heat oven to 250°. Toss lamb, potatoes, parsley, carrots, onions, salt, pepper, and 2 cups water in an 8-qt. Dutch oven; bring to a simmer. Transfer to oven and bake, covered, until lamb is just tender, about 2 hours. Stir in peas; continue to bake, covered, until lamb is very tender, about 30 minutes more. Let sit 20 minutes before serving.

SERVES 4

- 1 tsp. saffron threads
- 2 tsp. kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. whole black peppercorns
- 1 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -4-lb. chicken
- 6 sprigs rosemary
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced
- Butcher's string, for tying

Heat oven to 400°. Heat an 8" skillet over medium. Cook saffron until lightly toasted and fragrant, 1-2 minutes; let cool and transfer to a mortar and pestle. Add salt and peppercorns; grind into a coarse powder. Slide fingers under the skin of chicken breast to create a pocket. Rub spices over and under the skin, and inside the cavity. Place rosemary and lemon slices under the skin and inside the cavity. Tie legs together using butcher's string and tuck wings under back; roast until browned and an instant-read thermometer inserted into thickest part of thigh reads 165°, about 1 hour. Let rest 10 minutes before carving.



Roast Chicken with Saffron and Lemon

A roast chicken, its meat moistened and its golden skin crisped by the heat, is a classic dish everywhere, including in Spain, where bright lemons and musky, floral saffron lend intoxicating flavor to the bird.



SERVES 10-12

For the cake:

- 3 ½ cups cake flour
- 4 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 2 cups sugar
- 16 tbsp. unsalted butter, softened, plus more
- 1 cup whole milk
- ½ tsp. rose water (see page 94)
- 8 egg whites

For the icing:

- 4 cups sugar
- 6 egg whites
- ½ tsp. rose water
- 1 ½ cups roughly chopped pecans
- ¾ cup raisins, minced
- 2 tbsp. minced candied orange peel
- 5 dried figs, minced

1 Make the cake: Heat oven to 375°. Whisk flour, baking powder, and salt in a bowl. Cream sugar and butter in a stand mixer on medium-high until fluffy. With the motor running, alternately add dry ingredients in 3 batches and milk in 2 batches. Add rose water; increase speed to high and beat until batter is smooth, about 5 seconds. In a separate bowl, whip whites until stiff peaks form; fold into batter. Divide batter between 3 greased 9" round cake pans; bake until a toothpick inserted in middle comes out clean, 25-30 minutes. Invert cakes onto wire racks; let cool.

2 Make the icing: Boil 2 cups water in a 4-qt. saucepan. Stir in sugar; cook until dissolved, about 5 minutes, and set syrup aside. In a stand mixer, whip whites until stiff peaks form. With the motor running, slowly

drizzle in reserved syrup; whip until icing is room temperature, about 10 minutes. Beat in rose water. Transfer 3 cups icing to a bowl; mix ½ cup pecans, the raisins, orange peel, and figs into remaining icing.

3 To assemble, place one cake layer on a cake stand; spread with one-third the fruit-and-nut icing. Repeat with remaining layers and fruit-and-nut icing, ending with icing. Spread plain icing over top and sides of cake; press remaining pecans onto sides of cake. Chill 20 minutes before serving.

Lady Baltimore Cake

Three dreamy white layers of cake are infused with rose water, slathered with an Italian meringue frosting, and studded with pecans, raisins, dried figs, and candied orange peel. A traditional Southern confection, this regal dessert gained popularity through writer Owen Wister's 1906 romance novel, *Lady Baltimore*.

Crumpets

A delectable British treat, these springy pancakes are molded in a shallow ring on the griddle and pan-fried until golden. They get their distinctive nooks and crannies—ideal for a slick of jam and butter—from a yeast-based batter boosted with baking soda.

MAKES 1 DOZEN

- 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups flour
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking soda
- 2 cups whole milk (1 cup heated to 115°, 1 cup room temperature)
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. package active dry yeast
- Unsalted butter, for greasing and serving
- Jam, for serving (optional)

1 Whisk flour, salt, and baking soda in a bowl; set aside. Combine heated milk, the sugar, and yeast in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment; let sit until foamy, about 10 minutes. With the motor running, slowly add dry ingredients, and then remaining milk until a sticky dough forms; cover loosely with plastic wrap and set in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

2 Heat a 12" cast-iron skillet over medium; place a greased 4" ring mold in pan. Fill ring with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup batter. Cook until bubbles appear on the surface, about 6 minutes. Carefully remove ring and flip crumpet; cook until golden and cooked through, about 5 minutes more. Repeat with remaining batter, greasing ring mold each time. Serve warm with butter and jam, if you like.





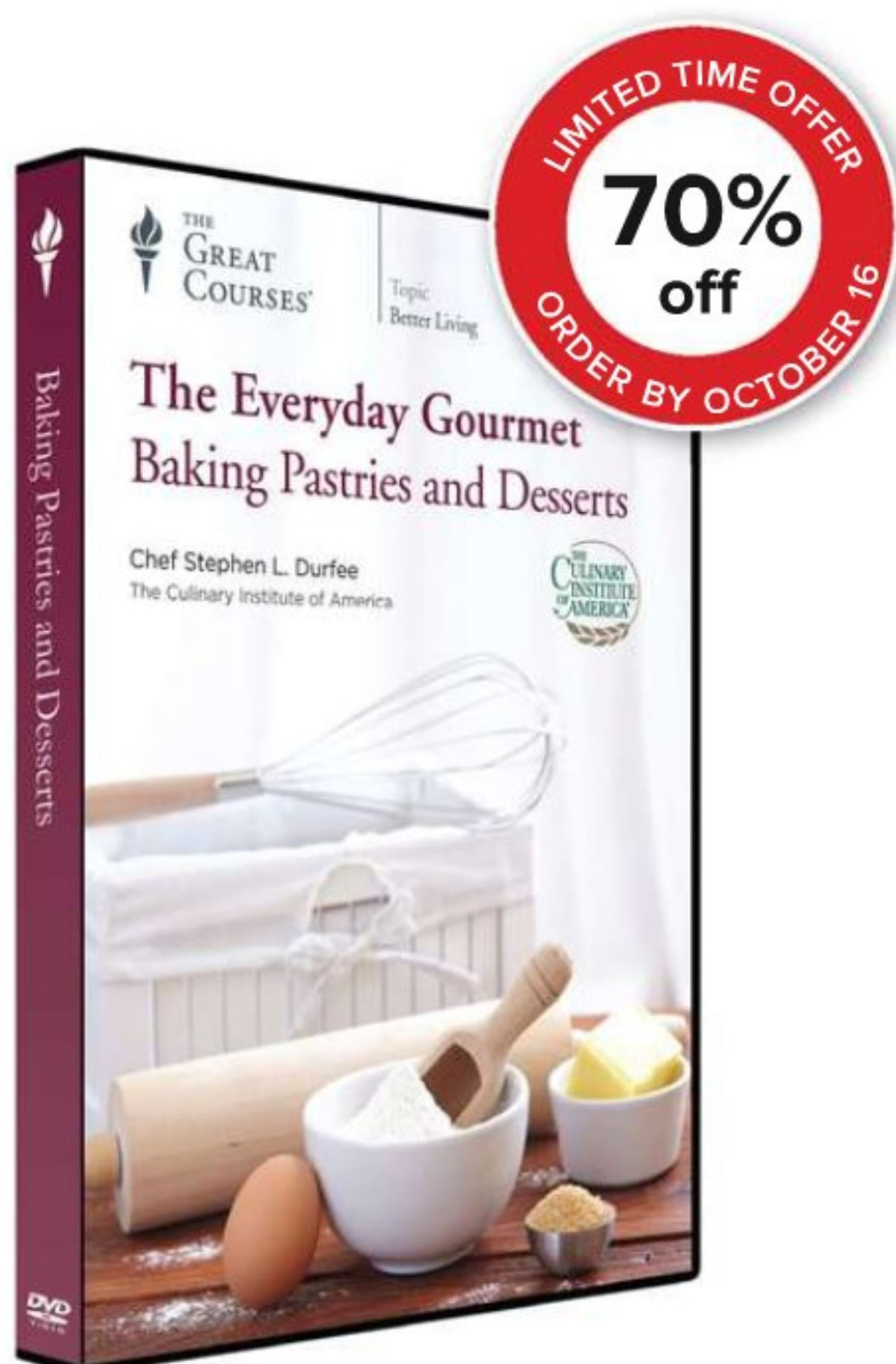
Moonwalk

In 1969, Joe Gilmore, head barman at the Savoy Hotel's American Bar in London, invented this citrusy champagne cocktail to commemorate the Apollo 11 moon landing. The drink—an enlivened combination of grapefruit juice, orange liqueur, and a hint of rose water, topped with bubbly—was the first thing astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin sipped upon returning to earth. We think it's positively out of this world.

MAKES 1 COCKTAIL

- 1 oz. fresh grapefruit juice
- 1 oz. orange liqueur, preferably Grand Marnier
- 3 drops rose water (see page 94)
- Champagne or sparkling wine, for topping

Combine grapefruit juice, orange liqueur, and rose water in an ice-filled shaker. Shake vigorously and strain into a champagne flute; top with champagne.



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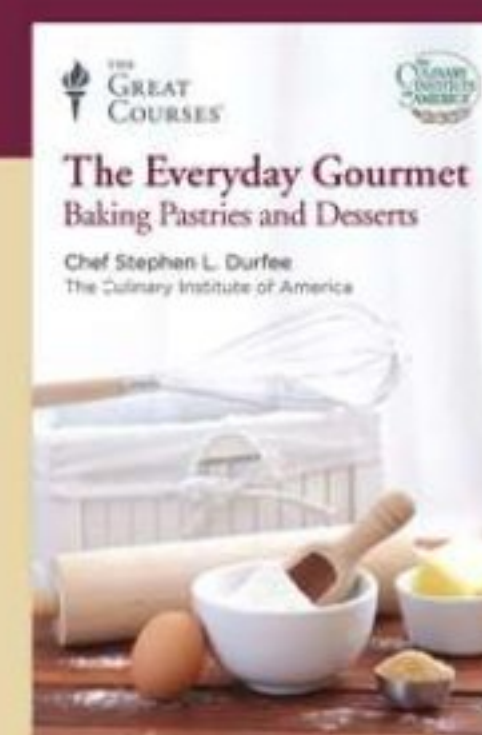
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Louisiana Purchase

All great gumbos start with a few homegrown ingredients and a pot

While gumbos vary widely (see "Gumbo Paradise," page 50), there are gold standards when it comes to the ingredients and tools used to make them. The 8-qt., cast-iron **1 King Kooker** (\$72; kingkooker.com) heats uniformly for an even, dark roux (see page 64 for recipe). When convenience calls for pre-made roux, we use **2 Savoie's Old Fashioned Dark Roux** (\$3.37 for 1 lb.; cajungrocer.com). Along with the Cajun holy trinity of celery, onion, and bell pepper, **3 Poche's Market andouille and tasso** (andouille, \$8.62 for 1 lb.; tasso, \$9.70 for 1 lb.; poche'smarket.com) and **4 Teet's Food Store smoked turkey neck** (\$3.50 for 1 lb.; teetsfoodstore.com) enrich our meat gumbos, while **5 blue crabs and shrimp**, sourced through the Louisiana Seafood Board (louisianaseafood.com), star in our seafood gumbo (see page 62 for recipe). To thicken the fried chicken and andouille gumbo (see page 61 for recipe), we use **6 Uncle Bill's Creole Filé**, ground from sassafras leaves (\$10 for 2 oz.; fileman65@aol.com). **7 Tony Chachere's Creole seasoning** (\$2 for 8 oz.; tonychachere.com), a mix of cayenne, garlic and onion powders, dried oregano and thyme, black pepper, and salt, flavors the oxtail gumbo (see page 62 for recipe). Top them all with long-grain **8 Cajun Country Rice** (\$1 for 1 lb.; cajuncountryrice.com).

—Farideh Sadeghin





New Orleans chef **DONALD LINK** (above, center) brought us into his home kitchen to give us the lowdown on gumbo's building blocks: roux and stock. Here are the takeaways: **Roux**—a flavorful thickener made by cooking fat with flour—sets the tone for the dish. A dark, dense roux adds body and burnt-popcorn depth to smoked turkey and andouille gumbo (see [page 64](#) for recipe), while a lighter one lends nuttiness and a soupier consistency—perfect for smoked goose and foie gras gumbo (see [page 62](#) for recipe). For control when stirring, use a whisk; it helps break up clumps of flour and incorporate them into the fat. Cook roux in a cast-iron pot, which heats evenly, and stir slowly and continually, reaching into the pot's corners, so the flour doesn't burn. **Stock** can also make or break your gumbo. For the best-tasting version, caramelize the meat first, and then skim the fat as the stock cooks. It will become more concentrated, so wait until the end of cooking to season to taste. —F.S.

RING LEADER

Crumpets (see [page 87](#) for recipe), yeasted griddle cakes, are made from a sticky dough fried in a ring mold. Here's how to shape and cook them. —F.S.



1 Heat a 12" cast-iron skillet over medium; place a greased 4" ring mold in pan. Fill with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup batter.



2 Using a wet spoon, spread batter evenly into greased ring mold, pushing batter into sides of the mold.



3 Cook crumpet until bubbles appear on the surface, about 6 minutes; carefully remove ring.



4 Flip crumpet; cook until exterior is golden brown and crumpet is cooked through, 5 minutes more.

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Sugary Surrender

Ben Mims was *SAVEUR*'s associate food editor when I arrived in 2012, and I remember lingering over his heavenly dessert recipes. Now he has given us an entire cookbook of treats to peruse: *Sweet & Southern* (Rizzoli, 2014). Here our former co-worker gathers Southern twists on pastry classics (mint-julep crème brûlée), updates of down-home staples (hummingbird cake), and a few international recipes (the Indonesian cinnamon-chocolate cake *spekkuk*) inspired by his time at *SAVEUR*. Each recipe is presented with an eye for technique and a borderline-obsessive attention to detail—a mark of his pastry chef background—plus plenty of his irresistible Mississippi charm. —*Laura Sant*

Club Soda While testing the recipe for chickpeas with pita and spiced yogurt (page 76), I remembered something I'd read in Harold McGee's *On Food and Cooking* (Scribner, 1984): Alkalinity breaks down beans' cellular walls. I soaked two batches of chickpeas overnight, one with baking soda, an alkaline compound, and one without. When I boiled them the next day, the soda-soaked chickpeas turned tender at 40 minutes, outpacing the plain by a whopping 35 minutes. —*Kellie Evans*



Don't Roux the Day

Most Louisianians believe you can't make a good gumbo without a roux. That may be so, but, as it turns out, you can make a roux without exhaustively stirring it over a hot stove. Alton Brown, host of *Good Eats*, offers cramped wrists and sweating brows a respite with his simple, indirect cooking method. Heat an oven to 350°. Whisk equal parts canola oil and flour in an 8-qt. Dutch oven; bake, uncovered, until the color reaches the requisite dark brown, about 1½–2 hours. Then simply transfer the pot from the oven to your stove and make your gumbo. We love this technique because it leaves us free to do other things, like make a stock, while the roux darkens without any fuss. —*K.E.*

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STICKY SCIENCE

Why prep your cake pan? We asked Shirley O. Corriher, author of *Bake Wise* (Scribner, 2008), to give us the science behind greasing and flouring. When you put a cake in the oven, Corriher said, the heat unravels the batter's proteins and then coagulates them over time. In an untreated pan, they stick to surfaces like glue. Greasing puts a barrier between the batter and pan, so that the proteins form in a solid mass without latching onto other surfaces. Flouring protects the fat from dissolving into the batter. Another step is to use a baking stone: It will heat the cake pan quickly, hastening protein coagulation and helping to prevent sticking. —Jake Cohen

Lebanese Library

Though smaller than Connecticut, Lebanon boasts intensely diverse foodways. As we worked on "Home for the Harvest" (see [page 66](#)), we found a few cookbooks especially useful in deciphering the country's many cuisines. Broad in scope, Anissa Helou's **Levant** (HarperCollins, 2013) explores her Lebanese-Syrian family's background and cuisine, with such tantalizing recipes as bulgur cooked

with pork belly and sweet pistachio pie. **Lebanese Mountain Cookery** (David R. Godine, 1987), by Mary Laird Hamady, is a compilation of recipes from the mountain town of Baakline. It includes an entire section on variations of *fatteh*, dishes made with day-old flatbread, which is fried in brown butter and layered with ingredients like chicken and pine nuts or eggplant and goats' milk yogurt. **Man'oushé** (Interlink Books, 2014), by Barbara Abdeni Massaad, is the definitive guide

to baking the namesake flatbread. It is organized by topping, with chapters on *za'atar*, wild thyme, as well as ones on sweet renditions like chocolate and halawa. Salma Hage's stunning, 500-recipe tome, **The Lebanese Kitchen** (Phaidon, 2012), is a deep dive into the cooking of the author's Maronite village. Beyond hummus and kibbeh (for which there are pages of versions), it highlights lesser-known dishes, such as tender *shish barak*, spinach and cheese dumplings. We also love **Malouf** (Hardie Grant, 2011), co-authored by Lebanese-Australian chef Greg Malouf and his ex-wife, Lucy. Its elegantly photographed, modern Middle Eastern recipes include artichoke-chorizo soup with roasted pistachios and a saffron prawn fricassee. —Felicia Campbell



DESIGNER DESSERT

Although the Lebanese butter cookies called *ma'amoul* ([page 78](#)) are easy to shape by hand, it's worth seeking out their traditional wooden molds. The beautiful long-handled tools, known as *taabehs*, are intricately carved, with different designs corresponding to their fillings. Pictured above is one for date *ma'amoul*, but there are also versions for pistachio and walnut. —Laura Grahame

FROM LEFT: ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL HOEWELER; ANDRE BARANOWSKI; INGALLS PHOTOGRAPHY



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PANTRY

A Guide to Resources In producing the stories for this issue, we discovered ingredients and information too good to keep to ourselves. Please feel free to raid our pantry!

BY KELLIE EVANS



Fare
Hangar 1 Mandarin Blossom vodka (\$35 for 750 ml; hangarone.com) adds floral, citrusy notes to the Planet of the Grapes cocktail (see page 24 for recipe).



Infuse the syrup for the Planet of the Grapes cocktail (see page 24 for recipe) with **dried chamomile flowers** (\$5 for 1 oz.; myspicesage.com).



Moist, compressed **Red Star fresh yeast** (\$3 for 2 oz.; whole foods.com) is our go-to leavener for Seabourn breadsticks (see page 28 for recipe).



Use **Pavan** (\$30 for 750 ml.; astorwines.com), a muscat grape and orange blossom liqueur, to make the Planet of the Grapes (see page 24 for recipe).

Routes
Contact **Virginia Is for Lovers** (virginia.org), the state's tourism board, to plan your trip along Skyline Drive.



Ingredient
For the kombu recipes (see page 44), we like the flavor-packed, easy-to-use **shredded Dashi-MaKom-bu** (\$22 for 6-oz.; theingredientfinder.com).



Kikkoman aji-mirin (\$7 for 17 oz.; whole foods.com) adds subtle sweetness to dashi-braised chicken with root vegetables (see page 44 for recipe).



To make dashi (see page 44 for recipe), purchase delicate, flavorful **bonito flakes** (\$11 for 4 oz.; amazon.com).



Dry **Momokawa Silver sake** (\$13 for 750 ml.; shop.sakeone.com) is as nice for drinking as it is for using in dashi-braised chicken with vegetables (see page 44 for recipe).



Gumbo
Use **McCormick's Grill Mates mesquite seasoning** (\$8 for 12 oz.; amazon.com) for smoked turkey and andouille gumbo (see page 64 for recipe).



Order **smoked goose meat** (\$12 for 8 oz.) and **rendered goose fat** (\$8 for 8 oz.), for the smoked goose and foie gras gumbo (see page 62 for recipe) from the Schiltz family (schiltzfoods.com).



Purchase **smoked turkey wings** (\$15 for 2 wings; store.frickmeats.com) to prepare the stock for smoked turkey and andouille gumbo (see page 64 for recipe).

Lebanon

Purchase our favorite Lebanese olive oils: Visit oliverstable.com for **Oliver's Table Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (\$29 for 17 oz.); contact Litani Imports Inc. for **Litani Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (\$10 for 29 oz.); 440-785-0777; visit mediterraneanmerchants.com for **Zejd Premium Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (\$22 for 17-oz.); and go to eliunt.com for **Ahram Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (\$45 for three 2-oz. bottles).



Purchase **Middle Eastern seven-spice powder** (\$7 for 3 oz.; look for "baharat"; kalustyans.com) to make spiced lamb patties with tomato and onion (see page 76 for recipe).



Use **Al Wadi rose water** (\$25 for 20 oz.) and **Cortas orange blossom water** (\$7 for 10 oz.; amazon.com) to make Lebanese date shortbread (see page 78 for recipe).



Sprinkle **za'atar** (\$6 for 2 oz.; kalustyans.com), a mix of sumac, sesame seed, and wild thyme, to make flatbread with za'atar (see page 78 for recipe).

Use tart, thick **Al Wadi pomegranate molasses** (\$3 for 14 oz.; amazon.com), a reduction of pomegranate juice and sugar, to make tabbouleh (see page 78 for recipe).

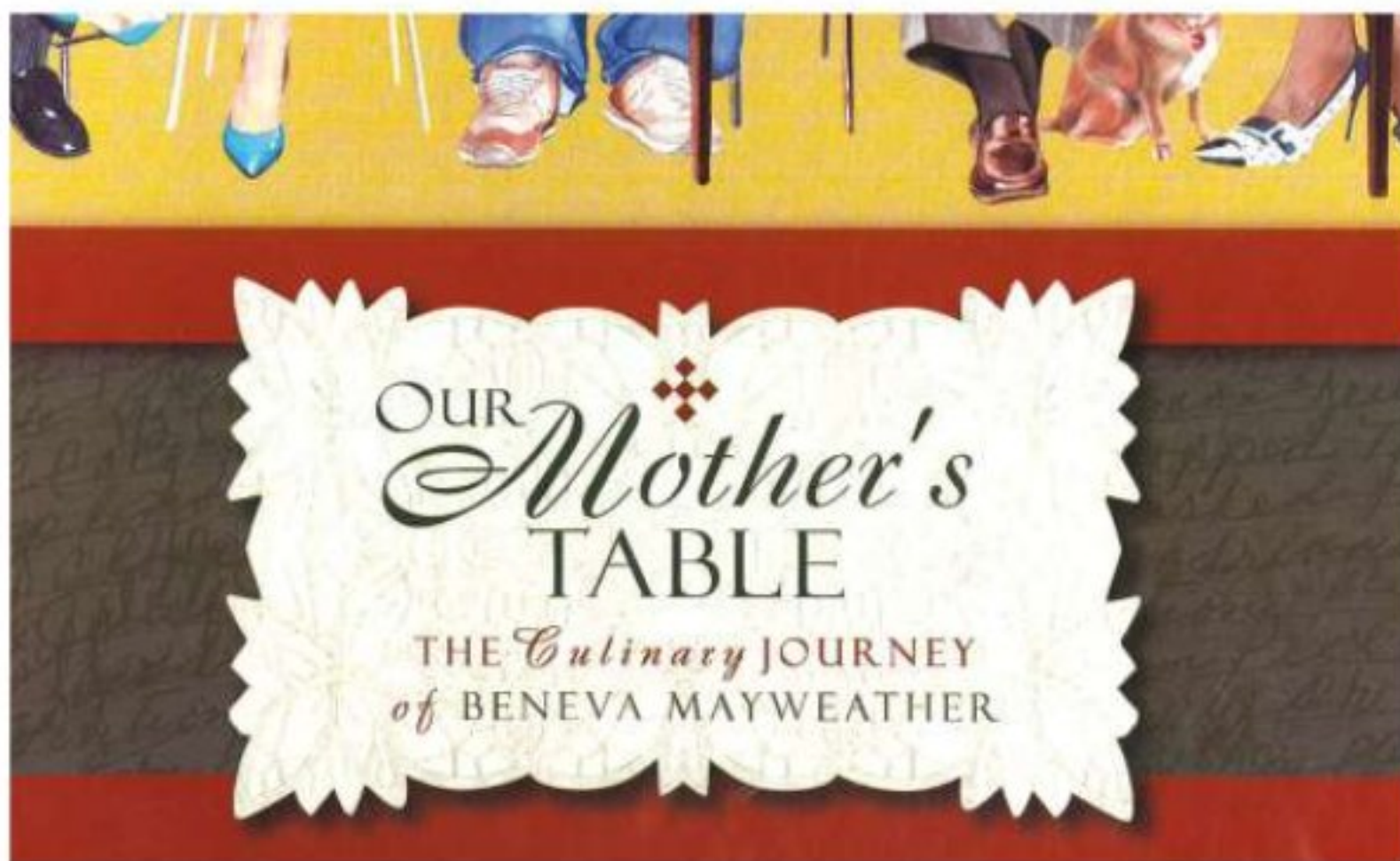


Use tiny, creamy-fleshed **fairy-tale eggplants** (price varies by season; call Melissa's at 800-588-0151) to make Lebanese lamb-stuffed eggplant (see page 76 for recipe).



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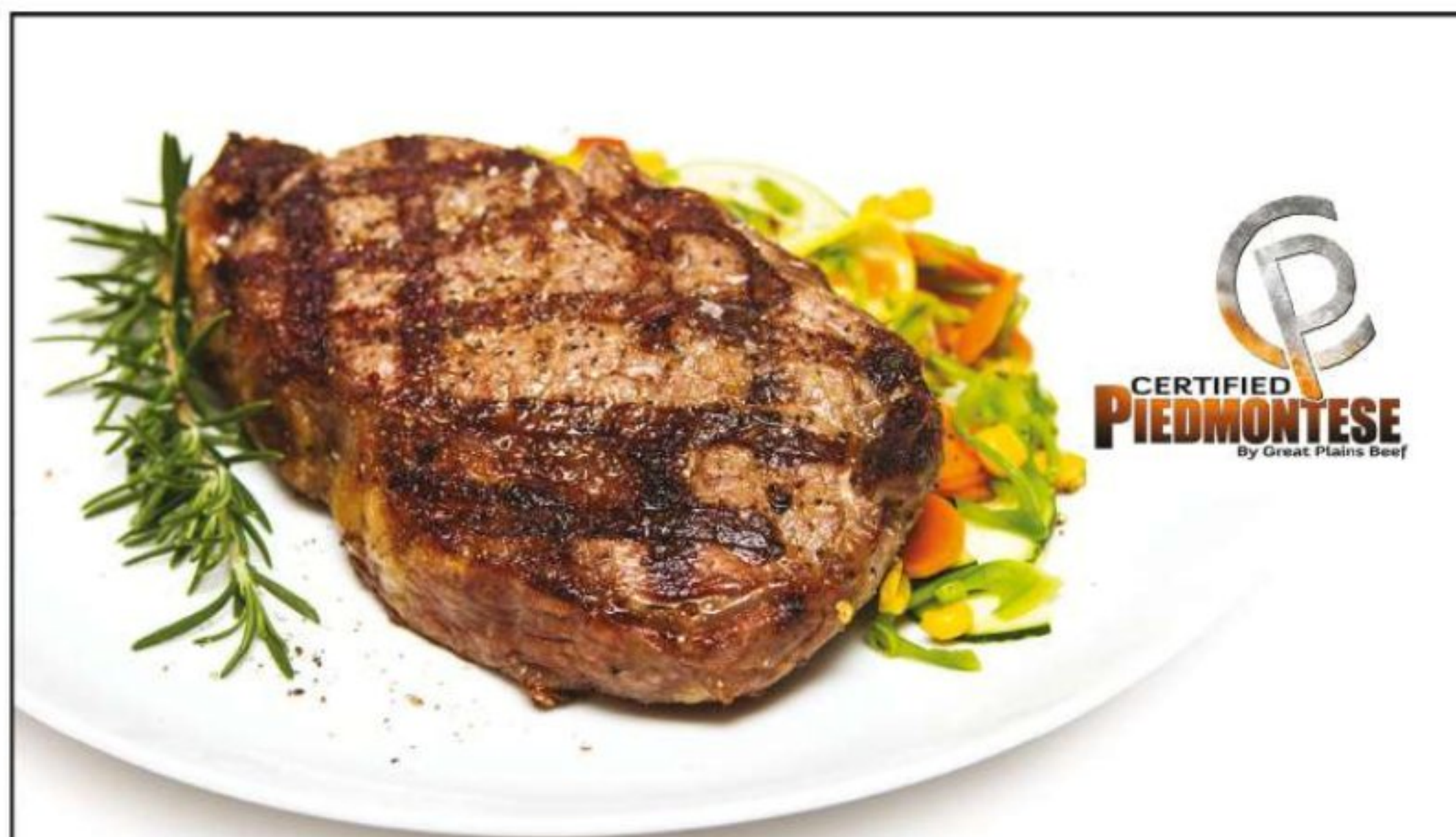
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